WITH THE UNSPEAKABLES

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WITH "THE UNSPEAKABLES;"

OR,

TWO YEARS' CAMPAIGNING

IN

EUROPEAN AND ASIATIC TURKEY.

BY

GEORGE STOKER, L.R.C.S.I., L.K.Q.C.P.I.,

A "STAFFORD HOUSE" SURGEON;

LATE CHEF DE L'AMBULANCE DU CROISSANT ROUGE.

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PREFACE.

It is a difficult task to convey to those "who live at home at ease" any true idea of campaigning life. Its conditions are so absolutely different from the conditions of home life—its difficulties, dangers, and pleasures, are of so new and varied a nature—that when the time and opportunity for reflection and comparison come, the two experiences are at such variance that one of them seems like a dream. On first entering campaigning life one is so struck with the novelty of the surroundings, and forced for the sake of very safety and conservation to realise them, that the intellectual energies become altogether receptive, and, accordingly, the spirit of comparison, which is the amusement of the tourist or traveller, is quiescent. Thus one becomes quickly at home in the new life, and learns to turn all energies to the exigencies of the hour. This is especially the case with a doctor. His time is so fully occupied that he has little opportunity for thought; and, when the excitement of battle is fiercest, all his thoughts have to be concentrated upon the details of his work. He is ever liable to an influx, sudden and unexpected; and when—as was the case in the Russo-Turkish war—the medical service is cruelly under-manned, each day sees a weary struggle with time to overcome or reduce the terrible

pressure of work. Few people have an adequate idea of the never-ending slavery—the hard, ceaseless, grinding drudgery, which had to be endured by the surgeons in the late war. With imperfect arrangements, imperfect appliances, insufficient bandages, deficient food and manual help, and with the heart-sickening feeling that all was in a state of confusion which might at any moment tend to hopeless disaster, our days and nights wore on. One can fancy the unremitting labour necessary for the discharge of duties, when it is borne in mind that for some three hours each morning, whilst I was *chef de l'ambulance*, I had to stay in the stables, or in the place where the animals were picketed, to see the horses properly fed and groomed—a fair beginning of work for a day that lasted whilst daylight remained.

It is a terrible feeling, and one which I hope that few of my readers may ever have to experience, to see hundreds, nay—as I saw at Schipka—thousands of men lying prostrate without help or hope; to hear the half-suppressed groans, and sharp, wild cries of pain; to pass amongst acres of dead and dying, feeling bewildered, and not knowing which way to turn, or where to begin! It is terrible to see strong men, overcome with cold, and pain, and hunger, gradually succumbing, to know all the time that even a little help, opportunely given, would have saved them, and might still save were it to hand. In Plevna the wounded were without help, for the doctors' hands were idle for want of splints. In Schipka, were it not for the prompt concurrence of Suleiman Pasha with my views, in giving me *carte blanche* for the increase of the Red

Crescent Ambulance, then under my charge, to bring the wounded to Philippopolis, that historic Pass would have been memorable for the death of many hundreds of men more than the number that even now rests on its slopes. With such work to do as he has, it must not be expected that a doctor's book can be a graphic one, and my readers must pardon the deficiencies of this little volume. Newspaper correspondents have given, from day to day, full, true, and particular accounts of all the leading events; every mile of the country has been mapped, again and again, in the morning papers; every view has been painted in words by the most highly-trained writers of the age. It remains for me but to give my own experience, chiefly from memory, aided only by hurried jottings in my professional journal from time to time. On the 27th of August, 1876, I landed in Constantinople, and, from that day, for nearly two years I lived, with few short exceptions, a life of unremitting labour and hardship—labour and hardship which overcame, at one time or another, most of the Englishmen who faced it. If I were able to tell all I have seen and heard, or to give even a tithe of the strange circumstances, incidents, and adventures in which I have borne a part, or which came under my own cognizance, I am certain I could interest many readers; but those who write know that when one has much to tell there is a certain difficulty of narration which does not exist under less plethoric conditions of mind.

Having read over my book in print, I am painfully conscious of its deficiencies. I can see that I have often merely

given the bare outline of a fact which cannot be of much interest to the reader who is ignorant of its details, and of the conditions under which it occurred, and which made it of surpassing interest at the time. I trust to the liberality of my readers to forgive such faults in the book of a man who went to the war to work, and whose work gave him little time for observation or record of minute details.

WITH "THE UNSPEAKABLES."

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

Rustchuk—Turkish Custom House—Veiled Beauties—A Splendid Race—Rough Pavement—First Impressions—Opportunities of Observation—Turks—Levantine Education—Greeks—Armenians—Bulgarians—Gratitude—Virtue Undiscovered—Bulgarian Household Life and Amusements.

AFTER passing Widdin, Rustchuk is the most important and characteristic town one sees on Turkish territory whilst following the direct route to Constantinople, being, as it is, the terminus of the Varna Railway. On approaching the town the traveller's attention is at once attracted by the tall minarets rearing their graceful forms, with their gilded summits glistening in the bright sunlight. From these the gaze wanders earthwards, at once caught by the peculiar construction of the houses—more especially the cool verandahs and latticed windows. These latter suggest to the stranger thoughts of harem life, beautiful Circassian slaves, jealous husbands, and unfaithful wives tied in sacks and cast into the waters.

On landing, the first thing that strikes one is the absence of hurry; everything is done without the least excitement, and offers a strong contrast to the bustle and confusion that mark arrivals from a steamboat in most of the river or seaports in Europe. Several solemn-looking porters carry the luggage ashore, and bring it up to the custom house, whither

the owner follows. On the way we meet Turkish women muffled up with a large white muslin veil, called a "Yashmak," so as only to show their eyes, and one feels inclined to raise the covering and discover the hidden charms—an impulse which is rightly checked, as its consequences would be at once disastrous. One is struck with the splendid physique of the soldiers. They are strong-looking, broad-shouldered, big-limbed fellows, with an air of perfect freedom and independence, but, withal, essentially polite and gentlemanlike in their bearing. There is no pushing and jostling the public, as is too common with soldiers, while they saunter leisurely along in knots of five or six. There is no rude laughter or shouting—all are quiet and dignified in their behaviour.

Another striking feature is the condition of the streets. It is as if a quantity of huge blocks of stone were thrown into a pool of mud, and allowed to remain till the mass solidified by the heat of the sun. In fact, habitual walking in a Turkish street one might quaintly fancy to be enough to make a thoughtless man grow thoughtful. He must always go with his head down to make sure of his steps, and this pensive attitude would, doubtless, after a while, induce an equally pensive frame of mind.

When I myself, on first landing at Rustchuk (*en route* to join the Turkish army), saw this splendid race of people—so polite, so calm, so dignified—with their magnificent physique and independent bearing, I could not but feel that there must be something radically wrong in the Government which ruled so fair and fertile a land, inhabited by such a people, but which, under maladministration, was so backward in the march of civilisation, and was steadily retrograding; whose dependencies were oppressed, whose sons were plunged in the depths of ignorance, and whose material surroundings were stamped by an almost hopeless decadence, rather than

with the mark of progress, which seemed to be their heritage.

Since then I have spent nearly two years in Turkey. I have come in contact with Turks of all classes, and with the inhabitants of European and Asiatic Turkey of all nationalities and creeds; I have lived amongst the Bulgarians, sharing their family life for a long time; I was almost the only European with the Caucasian expedition to Soukoum Kaleh during a period of three months. By the thousand and one ways a resident, and that resident a doctor, can come to know a people—judging from the evidences of his senses—by the camp-fire descriptions of men, far away from their native villages—by the yearnings of the sick—by the whispered confidences of the dying—I have entered thoroughly into the feelings, aspirations, and character of the Turkish soldiers and people. I can fairly state that I have had ample opportunities of judging of the various nationalities who inhabit European and Asiatic Turkey, and of ascertaining, from personal observation and experience, their leading characteristics; and I now propose giving my readers a slight sketch of what the conclusions are which I have arrived at with regard to these people with whom I have come in contact—especially Turks, Greeks, Armenians, and Bulgarians.

In order to arrive at a just conclusion with regard to Turkish character, it is absolutely necessary to discriminate between the people and the Government. The character of the latter is sufficiently well known not to necessitate any criticism on my part. We must, however, in common justice, allow that it was rather hard, when it had established a constitution and begun to try to reform, that Russia should pounce down on the country and prevent even an attempt to mature the scheme of reformation. Of the people, I believe, a very erroneous idea exists among the general public in

England, in consequence of the way in which writers, as a rule, have failed to discriminate between the different classes of the community—as, for instance, many have been led to believe that the mutilations of the Russian dead, and other horrors that were perpetrated during the late war, were the handiwork of the regular Turkish soldiers, whereas, in almost all cases, they were committed by the Bashi-bazouks and Circassians.

The Turkish peasant, as you find him in the interior, untainted by so-called civilisation—which is nothing less than contact with the dishonest and lying population of the Levant—is as pure and as truthful a man as one can hope to meet. He is truthful and honest, sober and hospitable; his word requires no written contract to confirm it; his hospitality extends to those of all classes and religions.

We have, then, a comparatively educated ruling class of Turks who are corrupt, and a peasantry and rural population who are incorrupt. It is, therefore, the "education" clearly which has engendered the corruption. But there is also a third class, the individuals composing which, though educated, are at the same time perfectly honest and reliable. These last are the few who have received their education in England or France, and they are found only amongst the officers of the army and navy, especially the latter. The first-named class, who have been educated in the Levant, and whose views of civilisation and honesty have been obtained from their intercourse with oriental Christians, are, like those whom they have associated with, utterly corrupt. The Turk is, therefore, I hold, capable of being educated as a thoroughly honest and trustworthy man, provided his instructors are proficient in these virtues.

The Greeks have the name, in the East, of being the greatest swindlers there, and that is saying a good deal. It is

a trait, however, which they share in common with Armenians and Bulgarians; but whereas the former are, to say the least, very diplomatic in their dishonest dealings, the latter are but clumsy liars. The Greeks are a most industrious people, and during the last half century Greece has made great progress. Roads and railways have been constructed, schools established, and all her ports, which were before the favourite resort of the Mediterranean pirates, have now been rid of these pests, and commerce is thus fostered and promoted. But my experience is that lying is more natural to the Greeks than truth, and, to my sorrow, I know that they never failed to swindle me when such a chance presented itself.

The Armenians have latterly assumed a new phase of interest to Englishmen on account of the protectorate which our Government has undertaken in Asia Minor. We hear Armenia constantly spoken of, but where that country is I cannot ascertain. I have asked people of all classes and nationalities learned in the geography of the Orient to indicate to me the geographical boundaries of Armenia, but have always failed to receive a satisfactory answer; and surely, if such a country exists, it must have boundaries. But though the boundaries of the country may not be fixed, there is a nationality of Armenians. Large Armenian colonies exist in all the towns of the Levant, but more especially in Constantinople. These colonies are composed of two classes—firstly, one comprising Armenians who are settled permanently in the towns, and who form part of the fixed population; and secondly, one whose ranks are recruited by a continuous stream of immigrants from Asia Minor, who come to seek employment as hammals or porters, and as servants. To their credit it must be said that these, so to speak, new arrivals, contrast very favourably with the fixed Armenian population, than whom they are infinitely more honest and trustworthy. Of the former class

one-half are bankers and merchants, and the others are in the service of the Turkish Government in various capacities; but they have no sympathies in common with the Armenians of Asia Minor, whose miserable condition they do nothing whatever to alleviate. In the society of the richer classes of Armenians in Constantinople their own tongue is rarely spoken, Turkish and French being the ordinary mediums of conversation.

There is no doubt that the oriental Christians, especially the Bulgarians, have been oppressed for centuries, but they have prospered and become rich. Before this war they were a very wealthy people, and their villages were pictures of rural happiness and prosperity. The great difficulty was, that with all this there was no security for life or property. What, however, they suffered most from was the farming of the taxes; and perhaps it is not generally known that these farmers were, in the most cases, Bulgarians, who themselves ground down their own poor fellow-countrymen with more energy and persistence than it was usual or probable for the naturally lazy Turk to exert. Employed as I was in distributing aid to the Bulgarians for more than six months, I had ample opportunity of getting an insight into their character, and I can truthfully say that they never lost an opportunity of cheating even those who had come to relieve them. This was, I regret to say, not confined to the poorer classes. In Philippopolis, when Lady Strangford arrived, instead of providing a good house for her, rent free, they put her in a wretched tumble-down place, for which she was charged about three times the original rent. "Help those who help themselves" is an old motto, but if it were followed out in the case of the Bulgarians they would be left entirely in their present condition. After the massacres of 1876, there was scarcely one of the rich merchants of Philippopolis who sub-

scribed a sixpence for the relief of his suffering fellow-countrymen.

One day whilst I was conversing with one of these gentlemen, and speaking of the great amount of money that had been subscribed in England for the relief works, he exclaimed, in a cynical tone, "The English know very well that the money they are subscribing now they will soon recover by means of their commerce with us." To say the least, a very grateful speech! I wonder which of our Manchester firms derives an income of £30,000 from the trade with Bulgaria in coloured prints or Brummagem jewellery!

A great deal has been said about Bulgarian virtue and chastity. Of course my professional duties offered me many opportunities of seeing a good deal of their private life, but it is a phase of their character I never experienced. In private life, as I found it, there was a great deal of assumption of virtue. The fact of a gentleman being alone with a young lady in his or her own drawing-room was sufficient to cause her to lose her character. I remember well one Christmas Day proposing that we should put up some mistletoe, and follow the good old English custom; but the idea was received with horror, and the lady of the house informed me that if any of the gentlemen were to kiss an unmarried lady, nobody would ever marry her afterwards. To appreciate this one must remember that, except in public, morality is an unknown quality to the Bulgarian. I believe wherever you have such great pretensions to excessive virtue and chastity there is always something worse underneath, and so it is with the Bulgarians. I have, on more than one occasion, known a priest of a village offer his daughter to the highest bidder.

We have, then, in the typical Bulgarian, who is found among the village labouring class, a slow, dogged, persevering,

industrious agriculturist, capable of being educated to a high standard, given to strong drink, and, as a rule, a liar and a cheat. It is unfair to say he has been taught these vices by the Turks, because the Mussulman villagers, with whom he chiefly comes in contact, are addicted to neither lying, nor cheating, nor drunkenness.

Life in the household of a Bulgarian notable, or rich man, as nearly as possible represents that state of things which we know existed in the farm-houses under the old feudal system. There is the same feeling of clanship between master and man; the family all take their share of the household duties; the daughters of the house divide the work with the hand-maidens; the wife is skilled in the art of cooking, and makes wonderful preserves and cordials; and in every house—more particularly in the villages—is a loom for weaving "shyack," as the cloth of the country is called. They also weave a coarse white towelling; or, again, a finer species of the same material, which is used for making divan covers or window curtains.

All the houses are, almost without exception, built on the same model. You enter a large hall which runs the whole length of the house, and off which the sleeping and sitting-rooms open. In summer this hall is very cool, and is used as a *salle à manger*. The kitchen is apart from the house, situated generally at the other side of a yard. Food is excessively cheap; and, as a rule, the Bulgarians live very well. In the morning black coffee is served; *déjeûner* is at half-past eleven or twelve o'clock, and dinner shortly after sunset.

Out-door games and amusements such as we are accustomed to in England are almost unknown among the Bulgarians. Their principal diversion is dancing, which is usually carried on after sunset in the summer evenings. All the young men and women, dressed in gala costume, assemble on the village threshing-floor. The girls are arrayed in the long black

national dress called "sukhman," which is highly embroidered, a silver waist-belt, white stockings, and coloured slippers, and their hair plaited and decked with flowers. The men are dressed in the native cloth called "shyack;" the trousers, generally some shade of brown, are worn wide and baggy like Turkish ones, and are bound round the waist by a broad coloured scarf; the shirt is made of white homespun, embroidered like the dresses of the women; the coat and waistcoat, made of the above-mentioned shyack, dyed some bright colour, are discarded for the moment; a fez or sheepskin forms the head covering; and the feet are encased in folds of cloth covered with sandals of raw hide, which are never removed till they fall off when worn out.

They dance thus:—The men and women arrange themselves in long lines, each sex being grouped together, meeting only at the centre, every one seizing his or her neighbour by the belt, worn for the purpose. The music is that of the bagpipes, which resemble in every way the Scotch instrument. As soon as the line is complete, the music begins, and the dancers gradually form themselves into a circle, and then go twisting and turning themselves like the sinuous coils of a serpent. As the dance goes on the performers get more and more excited, and the fun grows fast and furious, the "boys" uttering the same exhilarating shout which one hears during the course of an Irish jig!

The principal in-door amusements of the Bulgarians are backgammon and card-playing; the latter they enter into with great spirit, and get most dreadfully excited over a contest for a few pence, indulging in language which will not bear translation from the horrors of the vernacular. They sing also, but the music is not sweet. It is mostly rendered through the nose, which does not increase its beauty. The songs are chiefly of patriotic tendency. In a Bulgarian house-

hold the greatest respect is paid to the master of the house. His children never presume to kiss his cheek without being specially invited to do so, but always kiss his hand; and his sons never smoke in his presence, it being considered disrespectful. They keep an immense number of holidays—I believe nearly a hundred and fifty in the year, exclusive of Sundays, so that almost six months of that period is passed amusing themselves. They never keep birthdays, but what they call "name days," each one celebrating his "name day" on the day of the festival of the saint whose name he bears—thus, John, on St. John's, Michael, on St. Michael's day, and so on.

The Turks have very few diversions. They are much too lazy to exert themselves when it is not absolutely necessary. They are, however, very fond of "la chasse," in all its phases, and are very keen sportsmen. They indulge largely, like the Bulgarians, in backgammon and cards, but do not play much for money. They have a proverb which says that only two classes of men gamble—fools and rogues; the former do so, and are sure to lose; the latter do so, and are sure to win. Their principal amusement is sitting in a "café" reading the newspapers, talking politics, drinking coffee, and smoking cigarettes—in fact, after the true oriental fashion, enjoying the *dolce far niente*.

CHAPTER II.

Dragomans—Attentive Hosts—Hard up, and how to Raise Money—A Passport Swindle—*Confrères*—Rebellious and Loyal Sentiments—Bosphorus—War Office—Military Restaurant—Great Bazaar—Buying Uniforms—Soldiers and Officers' Kits—Our Nubian Friend—A Visit to the Slave Market.

THE Custom House at Rustchuk is situated close to the landing stage on the river bank. As I approached I saw all the functionaries were seated in the verandah overlooking the river, smoking in solemn silence. The porter who was carrying my luggage halted opposite a venerable-looking old gentleman with a long white beard, who saluted me gravely and motioned me to a seat. The first thing he examined was a small medicine chest; and, hearing I was a doctor, he was greatly astonished that any one so young as I appeared to be should be entrusted with human life. When, however, he was told that I was going to the war to serve his people he was greatly delighted, and ordered coffee, and gave me cigarettes *ad libitum*. Better still, he passed all my luggage without opening it.

As soon as I got out of the Custom House I was surrounded by a crowd of dragomans—principally Greeks and Jews—each of whom showed his peculiar excellence in a different language. "Je parle bien le français," "Parlo bene italiano," "Ich kann gut deutsch sprechen," "I spik vary good Ingliz, sar," were howled into my unwilling ears, till I felt like a polyglot dictionary; then, without waiting for an answer, each one considered himself engaged, and clinched his imaginary contract by seizing some article of my baggage and making off with it. Luckily I was not troubled with much of that commodity or I should have been obliged to run a dozen ways at once to recover it; as it was, it took ten minutes' severe

scrimmaging to get clear of these pests and set out for a hotel. I put up at one called the Islakhane; but I did not sleep there—the "natives" were too attentive. I wrapped myself in my great-coat, and retired to the balcony to avoid their unwelcome society. The consequence was that I got an attack of tonsillitis which kept me in Rustchuk for some days. While I was there Mr. ——, an influential English resident, told me the following anecdote, which illustrates what false impressions can be disseminated by an enterprising newspaper correspondent:—Our consul had been asked by a Turkish official (most politely) to show his passport; and what was my friend's surprise when an early post brought him an account of "An atrocious attack by a Turkish official on her Majesty's Consul at Rustchuk." *Apropos* of this—shortly before leaving Constantinople I was sitting drinking an after-dinner cup of coffee in one of the cafés in the Grande Rue de Pera, when I heard the following conversation between two impecunious countrymen of my own:—

"How is it, old fellow," said A to B, "that you are so 'flush'?"

"Oh," said B, "it's easy enough; the British public want atrocities, so I collect six or seven Turkish ones, and sell them to a philo-Russian paper at a pound a head. But," he remarked, "Russian atrocities are better still; they fetch thirty shillings if sold to a paper with philo-Turkish tendencies."

It is such men as these who at times injure the prestige of journalism.

I was rather glad that I did wait in Rustchuk, for when after four days I went down to the railway station to go on to Varna, I found a large contingent of doctors had just arrived, who were like myself going out to join the Turks.

When I first landed, the authorities charged with such

matters had sent up for my passport, which I accordingly delivered to my dragoman, with instructions to show it to them and bring it back to me at once. This he failed to do, saying it was necessary to leave it there to be visé-ed: and so I forgot all about it till an hour or so before leaving the hotel, when I asked the dragoman for it. He informed me that I must pay two mejidies (about nine francs) for having it visé-ed. I said nothing, but went to see our consul, and asked him if it was "all right." He told me on no account to pay; that it was an attempt to swindle. When I got back to the hotel the interpreter met me at the door, and explained, with many apologies, that as I was in the Turkish service it was not necessary for me to pay. He had heard where I had been, and knew, doubtless, that he was found out. It was after dark when we arrived in Varna, and I fear the peaceful inhabitants must have thought another Crimean war was about to commence. An "Italian from Cor-r-r-k," who afterwards distinguished himself at Plevna, favoured us with "The Wearing of the Green;" and to counterbalance the rebellious sentiments therein expressed we all sang, or rather howled, "God save the Queen." We then proceeded on board ship. It began to blow shortly after the anchor was weighed, whereupon our music ceased, or rather was overpowered by the howling of the tempest or other sounds still more suggestive.

It was a glorious morning when we entered the Bosphorus—one worthy of shining on a scene beside which all the "show places" of Europe sink into insignificance, and one in comparison with which the Italian lakes or the Bay of Naples, with all their wondrous colour and beauty of landscape, are as nothing.

It takes about an hour and a half to reach the anchorage in the Golden Horn after entering the Bosphorus from the Black Sea. As the vessel steams slowly along, there is an ample opportunity of enjoying one of the most charming

prospects that can possibly be imagined. The water of the Bosphorus, clear and beautiful, sparkling in the morning sun; groves and gardens running down to the water's edge; the magnificent palaces of the Sultan, and the charming villas of the Pashas and rich merchants, attract one's attention on every side. The graceful "caiques," or boats for hire, shoot backwards and forwards, urged by the sturdy oarsmen clad in most picturesque costumes. Passenger steamers, heavily laden, plying between Constantinople and the various suburbs on the European and Asiatic shores of the Bosphorus, flit along. Tall minarets and massive domes, stately towers and imposing ranges of military barracks, each add their feature to complete this wonderful picture. The beauty of the scenery is only equalled by the loveliness of the climate; and it is with a feeling of regret one hears the anchor "let go"—the desire being that morning would last for ever, that one might sit on, always drinking deep draughts of beauty.

The natural position of Constantinople is unsurpassable; but, alas! all the beauty fades when once you are within its walls—narrow, roughly-paved, dirty streets, and ill-built houses are but a poor fulfilment of visions conjured up by the magnificent prospect it presents when approached by sea.

The day we arrived was a memorable one, as being the coronation day of Sultan Murad; and we had a splendid opportunity of seeing Constantinople in gala costume. We visited the War Office next day, and had our first experience of the way Government business is done in Turkey. When I entered the council chamber of the Dari Shoura, or Medical Council, I was surprised to see the president haggling with a very disreputable old Jew for some common china bowls, price about four pence each. The treasurer was squatting on a broad chair, looking-glass in hand, admiring his ugly pock-marked countenance, and paying much more attention to the

arrangement of his beard than he was to his official duties. We sat there in solemn silence for about four hours; and as the shades of evening began to fall, and as these overworked officials were doubtless longing for the repose of their own homes after the fatigues of the day, we were told we might come to-morrow. On the morrow we did come, and heard that it would probably be three weeks before we left Constantinople, whereupon we asked for quarters, and were shown to a species of military restaurant where we could find lodging for six pence per diem, and food at an equally cheap rate. We were given fine large airy rooms, with four beds in each, so we were not by any means uncomfortable.

The next few days were spent in reporting ourselves daily to the authorities, and in wandering about the bazaars, and buying uniforms. The latter was rather a curious experience, and is somewhat different from the mode adopted in England. A certain part of the Great Bazaar is devoted to the sale of military equipments, which are all kept ready-made; and there you must go and try them on, surrounded by an admiring crowd, who seem to take at least as great an interest as you do in the fit and price of the articles.

A Turkish officer's uniform consists of a long frock coat made of blue or black broadcloth, buttoned tightly up to the chin, and trousers to match. The rank is denoted by the number, position, colour, and arrangement of the stripes on the sleeve. His head gear is, of course, a fez. He wears either top boots or bluchers, made of soft leather, with an overshoe, which is laid aside on entering the house. The private's uniform is usually dark green or blue in colour. He wears breeches, loose and baggy above, but fitting tightly below the knee; a waistcoat buttoning at the side; and a small jacket, not unlike those worn by the Eton boys. He is supposed to wear boots, but unfortunately the supply is very

deficient, and he is commonly obliged to have recourse to sandals of untanned hide, which he is accustomed to in his native village, and which, though very faulty in wet, are very comfortable in dry weather. His overcoat is of a rough gray or brown cloth. His accoutrements consist of a sack made of waterproof canvas, in which he carries his extra ammunition and biscuit, and which is borne on his back, being suspended by straps passing forward over the shoulder and back under the armpit, and a tin waterflask, holding about a quart. He is armed with the Peabody Martini-Henry rifle and sword bayonet. Every tenth man or so carries a large copper pan attached to his knapsack, which is used for cooking for himself and his comrades. The ordinary supply of cartridges is worn in a waist-belt, or fixed in little pockets made for the purpose on the front of his jacket.

There is one point, at least, in which the purchase of a Turkish uniform contrasts favourably with that of an English one, and that is the price. For about £7 you can buy a very respectable uniform, including sword, belt, &c.

In the room next to ours at the restaurant lived a gentleman of African origin. I believe he was a Nubian. He could speak a little of every language under the sun, from English to Chinese. He heard we were going to the war, and asked us if we wanted a servant, saying he knew "a very good slave boy, sar; he spik Italian very well, and his price is only £9." Accordingly, we determined to go and see this prodigy, and the next day, in company of one of my friends and the nigger, we set out to visit the slave market. Our guide led us through a lot of narrow streets, and through the horse market, till at last we arrived at a long two-storied wooden building with latticed windows. We sat down in an arbour in front of this place. When we first arrived, we saw quantities of black children running about, but they gradually

disappeared. We were served with Turkish coffee and pipes, and a lot of villainous-looking old fellows came and sat down beside us, who, our guide informed us, were the slave merchants, and were principally Arabs and Egyptians. They were suspicious of us, as being Englishmen, and refused to allow us to see the slaves. We thought our visit was going to be a useless one, and in order to gain admission to the houses, my friend suggested that we were doctors, and would be happy to see any of their people who were sick. The offer was accepted by an old man, who volunteered to lead us to his house at once. As we approached the door he went on in front, and we heard a great deal of giggling and laughing going on upstairs. We were invited to ascend, and were soon seated on a divan with the usual pipe and coffee, and as soon as we had finished, the patients were brought in, all young children—Circassians, I believe—suffering from scrofula. We prescribed for them, and they were taken away. We asked for some music, and the old gentleman gave an order, which was followed by the sound of something outside the door which must have been very like a guitar; but as the fair musician was not allowed to enter the room, our curiosity remained unsatisfied. At last we rose to go, and our host preceded us downstairs. I was the last to descend, and as I went I turned and looked and saw all the doors surrounding the lobby ajar, and many pairs of bright eyes glancing at me through the crevices thus formed. I counted about twenty-two. I returned after about five days, and found our patients much improved. The old villain was highly delighted, and was rapturous in his thanks, declared his house was mine, but did not include the slaves.

It was very tedious work waiting for our orders, and we were very hard pushed to kill time. We used generally to

pass the evening in Pera, but our being obliged to return each night to Stamboul almost neutralised any amusement we met with in the former place. By a regulation—origin unknown—one is obliged to extinguish his lantern whilst crossing the bridge over the Golden Horn. This bridge is most roughly constructed, and it is difficult to walk over it without stumbling, even in daylight; so it can be imagined how our difficulties were increased by the darkness of night. As soon as we arrived in Stamboul we were received by the dogs, who seemed to smell us out as foreigners, although we were in Turkish uniform. I think the only time our swords were of any use to us was in defending ourselves against the attacks of the street dogs in Stamboul. One day I went to the Seraskeriat, as usual, to report myself, but found it very difficult to get inside the gates; they were besieged by thousands of Turkish women "weeping and wailing." I inquired the cause of their sorrow, and was told that they were wives of the soldiers away at the front, who were demanding the pay due to their husbands; but, alas! there was no money to pay them, so there were many cold hearths and hungry homes in Constantinople that night.

About this time the Turkish festival of Ramazan began. The most remarkable feature of this feast is that they only eat during the night—at least they said so—but I used to see long-robed priests going to their rooms in a stealthy manner with protuberances under their robes that looked remarkably like melons and loaves of bread. At sunset precisely a gun was fired, which was the signal that the faithful might feed. There was never any delay in answering that signal, as the company were usually seated about five minutes before it, with plates served, and fork and spoon in position for action. The first meal after sunset was not unpleasant, but the second became an awful bore, as it took place about

three o'clock in the morning, and once the gong sounded at half-past two no more sleep was to be had.

At last, to my great joy, I got appointed to a battalion—the "Edernah Tabur," the Adrianople battalion—and was given orders to hold myself in readiness to leave Constantinople at a moment's notice. About three days afterwards the moment arrived, and in company with four or five other doctors who were going in the same direction as myself, I went to the railway station, and took the train for Philippopolis. My kit was not large—a pair of blankets, a few utensils for cooking, and a pair of saddle bags filled with under-clothing, &c., comprised my "little all." It was now three weeks since I had arrived in Constantinople, and I was heartily sick of being idle, and it was with a feeling of great pleasure that I bade farewell to the military restaurant and Stamboul.

CHAPTER III.

To Adrianople—Lost Baggage—Circassian Amusements—Philippopolis—Visit to Governor—Lost Battalion—Tartar Bazardjick—Drive in a Britska—Turkish Khan—In Camp—My Servant—Short Commons—Visit to Capujeck.

THE journey by railway from Constantinople to Adrianople occupies about eleven hours, but it might easily be done in half the time; the train only goes about ten miles per hour. The line is badly constructed, and would fall to bits if it was too much shaken. The Turks, it appears, were badly used about the construction of most of the lines in Bulgaria and Roumelia. They made a contract with a noble engineer for the construction of certain railways, the contractor to be paid by the "foot." A computation was made of the cost, and an average price fixed that would alike repay for mountain work—such as tunnelling, &c.—and for work on the plain, where it was only necessary to throw up a formation level. The wily engineer constructed all the lines on the plain, for which he was paid, and then declined to continue, as he found the average price was not sufficient for the mountain work. I believe the specimens of foreigner that have done business with "the Unspeakables" have not imbued the latter with a magnificent idea of European honesty. When we arrived at Adrianople we found two of our comrades had lost all their baggage, and they determined to return by a luggage train that started soon after we arrived.

As I had only to go as far as Philippopolis, I decided not to wait for the others, and I started alone the next morning.

The guard of the train had been employed all the summer

on the trains that conveyed the Turkish troops as far as Tartar Bazardjick on their way to the front. He gave a dreadful account of the conduct of the Circassians, who, he said, were greatly pleased with the Winchester repeating rifle with which they were supplied by Government, and that they used to amuse themselves "potting" at the passers-by out of the railway carriages. When there were no people on the road convenient to aim at, they used to wait till the train was going round a curve and have snap shots at the engineer and fireman; but the latter were too wary for them—they at once unshackled the engine and went away, and left them there to amuse themselves. Another favourite mark for the Circassians while riding along were the small birds sitting on the telegraph wires; and on more than one occasion I have known the telegraphic communication to have been interrupted for days, owing to the good practice they made and to their cutting the wire under the bird's feet.

When I arrived at Philippopolis I asked the guard of soldiers at the station where my battalion was encamped, but they shook their heads and said it had left there two months ago.

"Well, where was it?"

"Allah biler." (God knows.)

I saw it was no use asking further of them, and consulted the station-master, who advised me to ask our consul, Mr. F. Calvert. I took his advice, and went at once to see her Majesty's representative, who very kindly consented to come with me to the governor of the town in order to find out what I had best do under these somewhat embarrassing circumstances. As it was Ramazan, no business was transacted during the day, so we must needs wait till night-time.

Accordingly about ten o'clock we set out for the Konak or Government house, preceded by a cavass (guard) carrying a

large lantern. I stated my case to his Excellency the Pasha, who seemed very doubtful as to how he could help me.

"Yes, the battalion had been here some time ago, but where it was now no one knew."

"Would he give me money to go on with?" (My fare had only been paid as far as Philippopolis.)

"No, he could not do that, as he had no instructions."

"Would he write to Constantinople?"

"Yes, with pleasure."

"How long would it be before he would get a reply?"

"Perhaps two, probably six months."

"If I were to telegraph, would the answer be quicker?"

"Yes, I might have it in a fortnight."

He was candid, at all events. I was on the verge of despair; but I determined to go on. Next evening my friends arrived from Adrianople (having recovered their baggage), so once more we went on together.

While in Philippopolis I was invited to pay a visit to a friend of my host's, who was suffering from the result of an accident. He had been thrown out of a carriage, and had severely bruised his ankle. He had been badly treated by a native doctor, and was in a fair way to lose his foot. I paid him several professional visits when I returned from camp to Tartar Bazardjick, for which, by the way, I never received any remuneration. When you pay a visit in a Bulgarian house you are seated in the best room; one of the ladies of the family brings you preserved fruit on a tray, with three tumblers, one full of water, another full of spoons, and the third empty. Having eaten a spoonful of preserve, you put the spoon into the empty glass, and then take a drink of water to wash the preserves down. The first visit I made I was not *au fait* with this interesting custom, and greatly astonished a whole roomful of guests by commencing to eat

the preserves with considerable celerity, and was just on the point of asking for some bread to finish it off, when one of the gentlemen present who spoke English, kindly enlightened me as to this peculiar Bulgarian custom of entertaining guests.

When we arrived in Tartar Bazardjick the station was in a dreadful state of confusion. It was the depôt for all the men and munitions passing up to the front. We got "britskas" (a kind of vehicle peculiar to Bulgaria) to go into town, which is about two miles from the railway station. That was our first drive over a Turkish road, and I will never forget it. The roofs of these britskas are stronger than the floors; and so they ought to be, as one's head is oftener in contact with the former than one's other extremity is with the latter.

We found the governor of the town—one Naschief Bey—seated at supper in the verandah of the khan. He received us very politely, and was very much astonished when he heard we were employed by the Turkish Government, supposing that we had been sent out by the "Red Cross Society." To my great delight I received tidings of the "lost battalion," which I discovered was encamped on one of the mountain passes within four hours' distance of Tartar Bazardjick, whither the governor advised me to go on the morrow, and report myself to the Bimbashi (Major), then return to work in the military hospital in town. We were astir very early the next morning. Lying in bed is not by any means a Turkish vice, and everybody is about shortly after daylight. As it was quite dark when we arrived we were unable to see what kind of a place we were in; but aided by the morning light we had now an opportunity of doing so. A Turkish khan or inn is, after all, a very simple and convenient stopping place, admirably suited to the requirements of those who travel according to the custom of the country. A large hall or inn yard, surrounded

on three sides by a two-storied building, with a broad open verandah; on the fourth side is a range of stables. On one hand, as you enter the gate, is a coffee-house, while on the other is the office where the proprietor or his representative usually resides. In the centre of the yard is an eating-house or restaurant—it is simply a large room furnished with rough tables and benches; at one end of it is the kitchen—a large stone trough filled with live charcoal, on which about a dozen large pots are constantly simmering. The fare is mostly stews of different kinds, and you are at liberty to go round and choose the one from which you wish to be served.

As we were making our preparations for starting, a band of Circassians rode into the yard. They were evidently returning from the front, and their horses were heavily laden with spoil. They are very fine-looking fellows—tall, gracefully built, wiry-looking, with slender waists, and small hands and feet. Their dress consisted of a long coat of gray cloth, fitting tightly round the waist, and reaching below the knee, with a row of narrow pockets on either breast for holding cylindrical cartridge boxes made of bone or wood; a round cap of sheepskin, either white or black, with a cloth top; their feet encased in slippers of untanned hide. They were armed with Winchester repeating rifles, a revolver, and sword, a long-pointed knife and a dagger—the latter worn suspended from the waist-belt. Their horses were small, but strong-looking, and in good condition. They were, almost without exception, handsome men, but at the same time cruel and lawless-looking.

We had engaged "britskas" to convey us to our several destinations. They are simply large flat boxes, with a leather cover, mounted on springs; the wheels are very high and lightly made, and they are capitally suited for journeys "across country." Into these somewhat uncouth vehicles we

bundled our baggage, and then squeezed ourselves in on top of it. Our driver was a most picturesque-looking person, and belonged to a most interesting class, of which a word:—The "arabajee," or coachman of the East, is a person with whom the traveller in the Orient is constantly thrown in contact, and whose character, appearance, and habits form a very interesting study. The word "arabajee" is derived from the Turkish word "araba," which means a carriage, and the affix "jee," which denotes an occupation connected with the word to which the "jee" is affixed. Thus, *arabajee*, the driver of a carriage; *ekmekjee*, a baker—from *ekmek*, bread; &c.

As a rule, the arabajees are all Turks. The Christian subjects of the Porte do not possess sufficient pluck or "go" necessary for such an occupation; and again, the public security is not of such a kind as to allow the arabajee to go unarmed; and the Christians (at least in Bulgaria, of which I am writing) are not allowed to carry arms.

The arabajee is generally a young man—the life is rather too exposed for an old one—and very soon, by moderate industry, he saves enough to retire, and becomes a master arabajee, with many carriages of his own, driven by hired drivers.

Picture to yourself, then, a young man of, say, twenty-five years of age, with a most "devil-may-care" cast of countenance, a long-tasselled fez, with a woollen comforter (in summer muslin is substituted) wrapped over the fez, turban fashion, high boots, and a belt full of arms, the usual baggy breeches and small jacket, and you have a faithful picture of an arabajee before you.

Of arabajees there are many varieties, but one or two will suffice to give a general idea of the whole. First, then, there is the master arabajee, or one that has saved enough money

to buy two or more carriages and hire drivers. He may be found in the principal khan (inn), seated in the café, where he spends most of his time. It is with him the bargains must be made, and woe betide the unlucky traveller who shows that he is in a hurry, or betrays himself by announcing that he "must go at once," for the price is strictly regulated according to the hurry in which the traveller seems to be. Therefore, enter the khan very leisurely, seat yourself in the café, and, after you have smoked a little, ask the waiter (kavejee) if there are good arabas to be got for hire in the khan, that you are thinking of going to a certain place. After a little the "master" will inform you that he has very good carriages; and after that the bargain must be struck; and here only experience can help you. Everything is taken into consideration—your weight, and that of your luggage, state of the roads and weather, price of hay, oats, &c. If you conclude an agreement, you pay about one-fourth of the price as pledge money, and you may be sure of being fairly treated. Once you have paid this money, he will not attempt to go back in his word, or to extort more than his due. As soon as you have concluded a bargain with the master arabajee, you are consigned to the tender mercies of the driver. As a rule, all Turks are bad drivers, and arabajees are no exception to the rule; however, they are very plucky, and I never saw the road rough enough or the mud sufficiently deep to deter them once they are started. However, it is sometimes extremely difficult to start them, no matter what price you offer them; and more than once I have been obliged to apply to the governor of the place to compel an arabajee to start. On one occasion it was necessary to imprison fifteen of them before one could be induced to start.

As a rule, they are extremely honest. They are generally very moderate eaters, and, like most Turks, drink no strong

drinks, but they sometimes consume an alarming amount of "coffees," from ten to twenty being the usual amount consumed on a day's journey.

It is most amusing to hear an arabajee. "scolding" his horse. He commences by calling it "pig," "dog," "lazy," and then proceeds to revile his family for generations. The horse seems to understand, especially when the revilings are accompanied with a liberal supply of whip-cords; and when the soul of his great-grandmother is consigned to the greatest degradation—*i. e.*, of entering a Christian body—his pace increases vastly.

Carriage travelling is performed in any one of three ways—*i.e.*, by phaeton (pronounced pai-ton), by britska, or by post-araba. The first—by far the most comfortable—is a kind of open carriage with a folding hood, and is constructed to hold two; it is very strongly built, and costs about twice as much as a britska—the next most comfortable kind of conveyance—which is a large shallow box, with a permanent cover of leather stretched, and with very high wheels. It is by far the most certain way of travelling, as it will pass over walls, and through rivers and mud, where no phaeton could possibly go. The third species of vehicle is the post-araba, which is, as its name implies, used for carrying the mails, and only upon certain routes. It is a small, square cart, of plain wood, strongly and lightly built, but without any springs; it is therefore very hard riding over the rough roads of Turkey. It is drawn by two ponies or small horses, always in good condition; and travelling by post-araba has, therefore, the advantage of not making the traveller feel that he is a brute, as is the case with an ordinary araba, britska, or phaeton. But who shall describe his horses? I believe even the immortal Leech would have failed to convey a proper idea of what they are—broken-winded, broken-kneed, with all their prominent parts

an open sore, vicious-eyed, scraggy-maned, and mangy-coated, ungroomed, ill-fed, and awfully ill-used; but still they go—how, I can't make out. I think it is by constantly falling forward that they continue to pull a carriage along, for I feel convinced that without the support of the carriage they could never go.

The road to the pass closely resembled the one we had passed once coming from the railway station, but with this difference—whereas the darkness had hidden all the dangers and difficulties from our eyes, the daylight now disclosed the frightful chasms and irregularities of the way to our horrified gazè, as we wondered where were the Turkish corporations, where even the engineers—a question which still remains unanswered.

After some hours' jolting over this vile road we reached the village at the foot of the pass, on the summit of which my battalion was encamped. We availed ourselves of the ascent to descend and stretch our legs, which were cramped and sore from being doubled up in the britska. About two hours more and we reached the highest point of the pass; and here I bade my comrades farewell, and went to seek my Bimbashi. While I was trying to explain to the sentry what I wanted, he suddenly came to "attention" and presented arms, whereupon I turned round and saw a little old man approaching me. He was clad in a very ragged pair of breeches, a greasy flannel shirt, and had an old pair of slippers on his stockingless feet; he was licking his fingers, which looked rather greasy. Good gracious, I thought (making a military salaam), is this the major? and it was. He was very polite and kind, and gave me coffee and cigarettes; and when we had finished, he returned to his amusement, which my arrival had disturbed—*i.e.*, inspecting the melting down of some butter. From time to time he put his fingers into the pot and then licked them

with great gusto. It was seemingly after such a performance that I first saw him. I had nothing whatever to do in camp; there were no medicines supplied by Government, and my small stock of quinine was soon exhausted.

I believe the Turks were the first people to think of tents for the purpose of campaigning. Be that as it may, they are certainly, as far as my experience goes, the best campers I ever saw, and understand better than any soldiers I know of how to make themselves comfortable under canvas. They are supplied with "bell-tents" about ten feet in diameter. They build a wall of turf or stones about two feet high, and the exact circumference of the tent; the pole is elevated in the centre by means of a large flat stone, and the canvas is fastened to the wall. By this means they greatly increase the size and airiness of their tents. In winter they dig out one half of the ground covered by the tent to a depth of two feet or so, and in the side of the excavation construct a small fire-place, so that the temperature inside can always be regulated.

Our camp was admirably situated on the side of a hill, with just enough slope to carry off the rain. In front of each tent was erected a sunshade of green boughs, which offered refreshing shelter to the soldiers during the heat of the day. A flat piece of ground did duty for a kiosque. A hedge was erected, running north and south, and constituted the whole furniture of their place of prayer, indicating as it did the direction in which they should prostrate themselves; and here each morning and evening, kneeling in long rows behind the hedge, "they sought communion with their God." The priest knelt in front and indicated by his own prostrations how the congregation should worship, but no word was spoken. The soldiers were always most regular in the exercise of their religion.

I was given a servant. He was the laziest fellow I ever met, and I christened him Tembel-Lazy. He used to consider washing a handkerchief a hard day's work; but he was so good-natured it was no use getting angry; and perhaps, after all, he did not understand my Turkish.

As long as there was something to eat one did not mind the idleness, but soon the pangs of hunger caused considerable uneasiness. Our comparatively scanty diet was still further reduced, and our food consisted of biscuit and grapes. In order to satisfy my cravings and relieve the monotony of my life, I determined to go on a foraging expedition to a village called Vetern, situated at the foot of the pass. Accordingly one morning, accompanied by a lieutenant and a sergeant, I started. When we reached the village I asked the Bulgarians for food, and offered them money in advance; but it was no use—they would give nothing. At last, urged with hunger, I was on the point of doing something desperate, when we came across the village schoolmaster, who, when he heard I was English, was very friendly. He brought me to his house, where he produced a vocabulary in Bulgarian and French, by means of which I carried on a conversation with him, and contrived to get some food—*i. e.*, eggs, bread, and butter—with which I returned to camp triumphant.

One morning I was disturbed in a great hurry, and was told I must go to visit the Kohl-Aghassi, or Adjutant-Major, who, I was informed, was in danger of his life from some unknown disease, at a place called Capujeck, about two hours further up the road. When I arrived at the latter place I was shown into a room where some officers were seated, but there was no sign of the sick man. By-and-by, a lot of men were sent in suffering from fever and ague, dysentery, &c. I thought this was very good of the major to send all his men in to be doctored before being attended to himself; and as

soon as I had finished with the soldiers, I suggested I should go and see the major himself; whereupon one of the officers stood up and said—

"Here I am. What are you going to do for me?"

"But," I said, "you sent for me in a great hurry, saying you were dangerously ill."

He laughed, and said, "Ah! we were anxious to see the new 'hekim' (doctor), so that is why I brought you over."

I was so angry that if a nice-looking dish of stewed fowl had not appeared at that moment I should have got up and left.

A few days after this, an order came for me to return to Tartar Bazardjick to work in the hospital there. My contract with the Government provided that they should pay all travelling expenses, and when my Bimbashi suggested that I should pay seventy piastres for my journey to Tartar Bazardjick, I declined to do so. It was a gross attempt to swindle, as he wanted me to pay for a seven hours' journey, whereas it only took four hours.

Up to the present, the officers had tried to "do" me on several occasions; but from the common soldiers I had received nothing but the greatest kindness and consideration—they constantly going out of their way in order to oblige and serve me.

CHAPTER IV.

Return to Tartar Bazardjick—Bashi-bazouks—Hospital—My *Confrères*—Bulgarian House—An Obliging Landlord—Jealousy—Malingering—Arrival of a Compatriot—Rice Harvest.

TARTAR Bazardjick, before the late war, was a very flourishing town, but during and after the retreat of Suleiman Pasha's army it was partially burnt and destroyed, and the large stone bridge that crossed the River Maritza at this point was blown up. The principal trade of the place was in rice, the whole country round it for miles being nothing but rice fields. It may be imagined how unhealthy the place was—everybody, almost without exception, suffering from fever and ague. The Circassians and Bashi-bazouks of the town and neighbourhood bore a very bad name, and many of the so-called massacres and atrocities were laid to their charge. And here a word:—What is a "Bashi-bazouk?" for it seems to me that the exact meaning of the word is not thoroughly understood. "Bashi-bazouk" means, I believe, a soldier or leader who is always ready. This was the old interpretation, when raids and feuds were more common than they are to-day; but now Bashi-bazouks are nothing less than the very lowest dregs of the population, who never work, and are always fairly well off, to whom murder and rapine are more natural than even attempting to gain their daily bread honestly. They are always armed, and generally well mounted; they hang about the rear of an army, pillaging whenever they get a chance, never going into battle till the fight is over, and then only to rob and mutilate the dead. They bring nothing but odium and disgrace on the regular troops, with whom they are usually

associated by persons who have no means of knowing the difference.

The Military Hospital was situated in the middle of the town. It had formerly been the house of the principal Jew in Tartar Bazardjick, but owing to the necessities of war, he had been obliged to depart, and give it over to be transformed into a hospital. However, I have no doubt that he got full value for the hire of his property. I heard that his manner of extracting the rent was this:—The hospital authorities had a prejudice against paying money, but as the landlord was a merchant, he was given the contract for supplying various necessaries for the hospital. He would deliver goods to the amount of, say, fifty pounds, and receive a receipt for seventy—thus making twenty pounds by the transaction. This receipt he forwarded to Constantinople, to be paid by the War Office authorities there. He then gave a receipt for the rent to the authorities at Tartar Bazardjick, who drew the money from the Treasury—and put it in their pockets.

There were about sixty beds in the hospital, but whenever a train of wounded arrived from the front, the number was increased—sometimes to as many as two hundred. The beds were simply sacks filled with straw laid on the floor, no bedsteads being provided. There was a good supply of sheets and blankets, and the patients were fairly comfortable. There were six classes of diet according to the hospital regulations, which, however, only existed on paper. Early in the morning the patients were served with rice soup; before midday they got bread, "pilaff" (boiled rice), meat, and "hochaff"—*i.e.*, stewed fruit of some kind. In the evening they had supper, which closely resembled the morning meal. Altogether they were fairly fed, and the fare contrasted very favourably with that which the sick had in the first line of hospitals.

My *confrères* at the hospital were three in number—two Turks and an Armenian. The doctor was a most disagreeable person, deeply pitted with small-pox, and with a scowl always on his countenance. He was the most ignorant member of the profession I ever met. He had only two or three treatments for every form of disease—*i.e.*, bleeding, tartar emetic, and letting alone. The latter was much the most successful. Next in order came the surgeon, or "jerrah;" he was a good-natured, happy-go-lucky kind of an individual, who never did anything but amuse himself, and who was always getting reported and never reforming. The last was the apothecary, a pleasant little fellow—an Armenian—but of uncertain veracity. I slept in the room with the doctor. Amongst other things, I had a very handsome pocket-case that had been presented to me by a friend just before leaving England. When I got up in the morning, after my arrival in the hospital, I was obliged to go outside into the court-yard to wash, and when I returned I found my pocket-case was gone. My friend the doctor was the only person in the room, and must needs have taken it. I did everything in my power to recover the case. I had the whole place searched; the guard arrested. But it was no use, as it was not found; and, fearing for the rest of my "kit," I determined to leave the hospital and seek lodgings elsewhere. With the aid of the apothecary, I succeeded in finding a room in a Bulgarian house, into which I moved next day.

I had a large room, furnished *à la Turc*, with divans all round the walls, a couple of chairs and a table. My bed was made upon one of the divans every evening, and during the day was put into a press. The rent was not extravagant—about seven shillings per month, including cooking and attendance.

My landlord was a tall, foxy-looking individual, who readily

consented to market for me. I suppose he expected to profit largely at my expense, but he erred. I took the precaution of finding out the price of everything, and doling out the necessary cash to him. Mutton was about two pence per pound, and beef a little dearer; a fine fowl could be purchased for four or five pence, and everything else—fruit, vegetables, and milk—in proportion. I calculated it cost me about one shilling a day to live, including everything.

It was very unpleasant for me at the hospital. My *confrère* was as jealous as possible, and did everything in his power to annoy me. We were obliged to go on duty fortnight about. He would not consent to divide the wards between us. When his turn of duty came on, he began by changing all my treatment—in some cases, at least, to the disadvantage of the patients. I remember one very well. It was that of a soldier who was suffering from a severe scalp wound; and shortly after he came under my care he began to develop symptoms of tetanus. I at once treated him with hydrate of chloral, and he was progressing favourably, when my *confrère* came on duty, changed his medicine to lemonade, and he died two days afterwards.

This gentleman had a habit, when making his visit, of spitting in the patients' faces if they did not give him satisfactory answers. I had heard of this, and determined to see if it was true. Accordingly I accompanied him one day on his rounds; and, sure enough, one poor fellow with typhus was not up to the mark in his replies, and the doctor spat in his face; whereupon I declared my intention of reporting the matter to the military governor if he should happen to repeat his beastly performance, which I believe he refrained from doing.

My life for some weeks was a very hum-drum one indeed. I endeavoured to get leave to go and visit some of the places where the massacres had taken place, but only succeeded in

getting as far as Radlovo and Vetern. I shall never forget the first sight of one of these villages. There were no signs of war near to suggest the idea of faggot and flame having worked destruction so close at hand. In the midst of an apparently peaceful country one came upon whole villages burnt and destroyed. Ruined and blackened walls, streets blocked up with charred rafters and broken tiles, fragments of furniture and agricultural implements, were all that remained of once prosperous homesteads and villages. Since then I have seen hundreds of villages and some towns pillaged and destroyed; but the first impression was the strongest. A sense of utter loneliness seemed to pervade the place, and one looked eagerly on every side in hopes of seeing a human form; a few gaunt half-starved looking dogs were, however, the only signs of life the place presented.

I was very glad to hear one day, on going to the hospital, that my amiable *confrère* was ordered off to Nisch, and was to start the next morning. I found out it was one thing to get the order, but another to obey it. That night he developed extraordinary symptoms, for which he treated himself with strong doses of tartar emetic every two hours. In the morning he had arrived as nearly as possible at the consummation of vomiting spoken of by an American author—*i.e.*, that of throwing up his own soul—and was really unwell. It was the most disagreeable form of malingering I ever heard of; but the result to him was, I hope, satisfactory, for he did not leave for Nisch.

A good many strangers passed through Tartar Bazardjick, and amongst others several Englishmen.

One morning about four o'clock the governor of the town sent for me, and said there was a countryman of mine who had arrived during the night, and that he had got a room in the khan, that nobody would go near him, and he begged

me to find out what he wanted—adding, "He has a revolver, and you had better approach cautiously." Accordingly I stole along the verandah, and peeping in at the window of the room indicated, saw a wild-looking fellow stretched asleep on the bed with a revolver beside him. I retreated at once and got a long pole, and standing well to one side of the window, tapped loudly. The answer came through the window in the shape of three bullets. Then I heard some frightful cursing in "broad Irish," to the effect that the "d——d ammunition was out." So I approached the door and knocked, stating my nationality. This time my advances were better received, and the door was opened. I found out my countryman was a doctor going to Nisch. I got him a place in a britska with an Armenian who was going to the front. I heard afterwards that he fired twice at a cobbler, who was ignorant enough not to know English when the doctor inquired if his boots were finished.

Whilst I was in 'Tartar Bazardjick the rice harvest was gathered. Each village in the district sent detachments of young men and women to help to gather the crop. The grain was cut with a sickle, just like those used at home, and then laid in the sun till it was sufficiently dry. After that it was carried to the "threshing-floor"—a circle of ground about forty feet in diameter, beaten hard with wooden pounders. On this the grain was spread out, and the operation of threshing commenced. It was performed in two or three ways: either stone rollers were dragged to and fro over the rice, or about twenty or thirty horses, having their shoes removed, were driven backwards and forwards over the grain to "tread it out." A more common way still was—a number of heavy boards curved up at one end, not unlike sleighs without ranners, were selected, into the under-surface of which a quantity of sharp pieces of flint were driven, and the machine was then yoked to a pair of bullocks, who dragged

it slowly round and round. As soon as the threshing was completed the winnowing commenced. A breezy day was selected for the purpose, and the grain was cast into the air with broad wooden shovels; the wind carried off the chaff, while the grain fell on to a large cloth spread to receive it. As one may imagine, a great deal of the produce was lost by such rude means of gathering it, and what did result from the harvest was very dirty, being full of gravel and sand.

About the beginning of October Lady Strangford arrived in Philippopolis, charged with distributing relief to the Bulgarians who had suffered in the "massacres." I took advantage of a visit to that town to see her ladyship. She informed me that she was anxious to give medical aid to the sufferers, but was unable to do so, as she could find no doctor to help her. I volunteered my services, on the condition that she should get leave of absence for me from the Turkish Government, which she promised to do.

CHAPTER V.

Stolen Bag—A Curious Find—Batak—Carlovo—Suspicious Neighbours—Selgebah—Getting Rid of a Troublesome Host—Hissar—A Difficult Journey—Panagurista—Native Doctors—Bulgarian Charity—Perustitza—A Peculiar Sect—Gratitude Unknown.

SHORTLY after arriving in Philippopolis, Lady Strangford, accompanied by three gentlemen who came out to Bulgaria to assist in her work of relief, arrived in Bazardjick on her way up to Batak.

The Bulgarians gave her ladyship and party a very cordial reception, and sent carriages to meet her at the railway station. One of the drivers of these latter (doubtless a true patriot) stole a bag belonging to one of the gentlemen, containing geometrical instruments to the value of £20. We at once went to the police authorities and asked them to endeavour to recover the stolen property. They held out very small hopes of ever being able to do so, and wished us to suggest some course which they might follow. We inquired if they knew the names of all the "arabajees" or drivers who had been at the railway station when Lady Strangford and her party arrived.

"Yes, they did."

"Well, arrest them all."

They were rather taken aback at this proposal, but it was done at once. The next day, as there was still no account of the bag, we went to the governor, and suggested the arrest of all the male relations of the prisoners; and accordingly people to the number of thirty were put in gaol. That evening the bag was found; and, what was more curious still, the

finder was a deaf and dumb man—from whom, of course, it was useless asking questions.

We were obliged to wait two days in Bazardjick on account of the weather. However, the third morning broke clear and bright, and we started for Batak. The village is situated high up in the mountains, on an upland about 4,000 feet above the level of the sea. The road or path that leads to it is a most picturesque but excessively difficult one. It follows the course of a mountain torrent which you are obliged to cross no less than seventeen times. Nothing can exceed the wildness of the scenery. The gorge through which the torrent rushes is shaded by overhanging trees, which grow out of the cliffs on either side, and on a hot day form a most agreeable shade.

Of all the places that acquired notoriety after the massacres of 1876 there was none more notorious than Batak. In considering the events that there took place, there are two or three points which it would be well to remember. First, that it was not so much fanatical or political excitement that caused the Pomacs to commit these atrocities. There was, so to speak, a private motive. There had been a long-standing grudge on the part of these Pomacs against the people of Batak, because the latter had obtained a judgment in their favour in a lawsuit with the former with regard to the right of cutting wood in certain forests. Secondly, the number of people killed, as was at first stated, was greatly exaggerated. It was, I believe, 5,000; but this was afterwards, by careful investigation, reduced to 1,800. The first computation was made much too soon after the massacre to be accurate; for this reason—that many persons had escaped, and as their whereabouts was unknown they were supposed to be dead. These persons either afterwards returned to Batak or were found settled in other places.

The mode in which the last computation was made insured accuracy as far as possible. It was done by the doctor who was placed at Batak by Lady Strangford. The village was formerly divided into several districts or "mahales," and one of the tax-collectors for each of these divisions was found. He accompanied the doctor to the part of the village in which he had been accustomed to collect the taxes, and, as he stood on the ruins of each house, told the names and numbers of the several inmates that had lived there. It was then ascertained how many of these were at present in the village, how many in other places, and how many dead.

On my return from Batak I was sent at once to the other side of the country—*i.e.*, to Carlovo—to establish a hospital for refugee Bulgarians. This once flourishing place is situated right under the Ænos Balkans, due north of Philippopolis. It had been especially lucky in escaping pillage during the massacre. It was a very rich place, and offered a tempting bait to Bashi-bazouks and Circassians—in fact, they had visited it, but, by the influence and prayers of one Turk, had been deterred from doing any violence. With the assistance of this same Bey, who was a kind of lord of the manor, I obtained a large house, and set to work to furnish it. The Bulgarian community came forward and offered me beds which they had in their possession. Of course I accepted their offer at once; but when on the morrow I sent for the articles in question, I was informed that they were twenty-two piastres each. I afterwards found a better article for eleven, so I declined the offer of the community, and learned a lesson about Bulgarian charity. Everything I wanted it was the same story; and at last I was forced to give up going to Bulgarian shops, and to buy what I wanted from Turkish merchants.

There were various conjectures rife in Carlovo about our hospital. Some thought it was only a pretence to say it was

for Bulgarians, and imagined that Turkish wounded would be brought in; others thought it was a "Lock Hospital," and others a house of "ill-fame." Our immediate neighbours hit on the latter idea, and their virtuous indignation was beautiful to behold. As soon as the hospital was set going I handed it over to the care of the Bulgarian doctor, and set out for Philippopolis where I had some business to transact. I found Mr. Stoney, representing the Constantinople Committee, had arrived, and was beginning to work in a business-like manner that promised well for future success, and so it turned out. Of all the societies that worked at Bulgarian relief his carried off the palm. As he was setting out to go in the direction of Carlovo, I determined to accompany him. There was also of the party Monsieur Isidore, a Pole, Mr. Stoney's assistant. We stopped to pass the first night at a village called Selgebah. And here a word about the reception one meets with in a Bulgarian village as contrasted with Turkish ones. In the latter, of course, the stranger and Christian cannot be received in the private dwellings, on account of the "harem;" but in each village a room is set apart for visitors—the "mustafir odasi" (*i.e.*, strangers' room)—and to this you are shown. Then each one, in accordance with his wealth, brings you something to refresh the inner man; one brings eggs, another bread, another milk, another honey, and so on. You have a comfortable bed to sleep on; and when you depart in the morning, if anything at all is accepted, it is in strict accordance with the marketable value of what you have received, and no attempt whatever is made to defraud you. When, on the contrary, you enter a Bulgarian village, you wander about in the mud and dirt looking for the "kayah" (the person appointed by Government to look after strangers), and he finds you a share of a dirty room, where you are obliged to lie with the family (not to sleep—there

are too many vermin for that). You get bad, dirty food to eat; and in the morning when you leave, hungry and unrefreshed, your fast-waning patience is irritated by being asked three prices for everything. That is the result of my experience; and I had other things to expect, considering I was bringing relief (gratuitous) to these people. So it was at Selgebah; but we were more fortunate than usual in obtaining a room to ourselves. After we had finished supper, we arranged our beds round the stove and prepared to turn in. Just as we were in the act of doing so the door opened and our dirty host appeared, carrying a still dirtier bed covered with vermin, which he placed close to ours, and announced his intention of keeping us company. Here was a dilemma: he was our host, and of course we could not in common politeness order him out. At last our Polish friend hit on a plan, and addressing him in Turkish (which he spoke fluently), said:

"Effendi, you are married, I understand?"

"Yes, sir."

"And do you mean to say that you are going to sleep here and leave your wife alone by herself?"

"Yes," replied our host; "it's no matter for one night."

"Well, if you do," replied M. Isidore, getting up and preparing to move his bed, "I will go and keep her company."

"Oh no, effendi; don't trouble yourself," replied our host, getting alarmed.

"But I will," said the other, preparing to move off, having rolled up his bedding.

Whereupon the proprietor, seeing he was apparently in earnest, bundled up his bed-clothes and beat a hasty retreat, locking and bolting the door after him, while we laughed heartily at the result of our friend's stratagem.

Next day I parted with my friends and went on through Hissar to Carlovo. Hissar possesses three splendid natural

hot baths, and is a place of favourite spring resort for the inhabitants of Philippopolis. It possesses a great reputation for curing all forms of skin diseases. I found the water to be strongly impregnated with chlorate of potash.

The hospital was flourishing at Carlovo, the Bulgarian doctor having been very attentive and used up a large stock of medicines in a surprisingly short time.

It was about this period that the English nurses sent out to assist in the hospital work arrived in Philippopolis. Two of them were to go up to Batak, and I was sent for to accompany them. One of them weighed about sixteen stone, and there was considerable doubt as to whether a horse could be found strong enough to carry her up the steep mountain path that leads to Batak. As she was delivered to my special care, I determined to walk, in order to be ready if any accident should occur. Since my last trip to Batak a change had come over the scene—heavy snow had fallen, which rendered the path up the ravine which we had followed before quite impracticable, and in order to reach the village we were obliged to choose a much more circuitous route. On leaving Pestera (situated at the foot of the mountains), we put the nurse on a strong mule. Just as we were leaving the village he got nasty, kicked me in the thigh, and knocked me in one direction, while the nurse tumbled off in the other. She was a little shaken and a good deal frightened, and would not mount the mule again; so we selected a strong-looking horse and put her up, but before we had gone two hundred yards the animal went lame and had to be left behind. As a last chance, my own horse, a strong and docile animal, was placed at her disposal, and we started once more. We had three zaptiehs with us—one at either side to hold the nurse on, one in front to lead the horse, while I pushed behind. In seven hours we struggled up that frozen path, and at last

brought our charge, more dead than alive, to the door of the hospital.

We heard many stories of the hardships and dangers the peasants were experiencing on account of the severity of the weather. The wolves had been driven down from the higher mountains by the excessive cold, and were committing sad ravages amongst the scanty herds of the villagers. Some of their stories of personal danger, on account of these marauders, were not so credible; and one youth related how, coming back to the village driving a pair of bullocks, he had been attacked by a flock of wolves, and one of his charges was killed and eaten, while he saved himself by riding away on the other.

From Batak I accompanied Lady Strangford to Panagurista, where another hospital was to be established. The road was frightfully muddy, and several times the carriage stuck, and we were obliged to get a lot of extra horses to extricate it. The intelligent Bulgarian who was driving at last crowned all his stupidity by going straight into a vineyard, and it seemed as if we were never going to get the vehicle out again—forward it would not go; but at last we managed to get it out by pulling it backwards. This delayed us a long time, and it was after dark when we arrived whither we were bound.

Panagurista was noted as having been the centre of the foolish and futile attempt that was made at insurrection during the early part of 1876. A force of some 12,000 Bulgarians had been collected there; they had thrown up entrenchments (with the ditch on the wrong side) on three of the four roads leading into the valley in which the village is situated, but, *mirabile dictu*, the troops came by the fourth one. The Bulgarians were, of course, very rudely armed, and some of their attempts to supply weapons of defence or offence were at least original. One ingenious smith constructed two cannons,

instruments of wood surrounded by rings of iron. One of these was discharged twice; the first discharge wounded a Turk, but the second burst the weapon, killing seven Bulgarians.

While I was in Panagurista I made the acquaintance of an insurgent who was in hiding there. He was a native of the place, and had been the standard-bearer of the insurrection. The Government was searching for him everywhere; but, although he lived in the village, they never succeeded in catching him. He used to come out during the night for exercise, and our house was his favourite resort. Very often he brought a three-stringed banjo with him, and used to entertain us with rebellious songs. He was a very fine fellow, almost the only Bulgarian I ever met with who had any courage—tall, well-built, with fierce black eyes, and an enormous black moustache—in fact, the very picture of an insurgent. He was noted for his powers of endurance, and I heard wonderful stories of his performances. He had been at a village called Metchka, near Panagurista, when Benkofsky, the leader of the rebellion, had arrived there. It seems that the people of the village were very undecided as to whether they should join in the rising, and expressed their doubts. They were at once reassured by their leader, who pulled out his watch, and exclaimed, "What! half-past two; the Russians ought to have been here half an hour ago. It can't be long before they arrive."

I found a good many sick in and about Panagurista, and many of them used to attend as out-patients. One morning a man presented himself at the dispensary, and I found he was suffering from a certain form of heart disease, and that he had been saturated with mercury. He told me that he had been suffering for some years from his heart, and that some weeks ago he had consulted a Greek doctor in Sofia,

who informed him that the disease was no doubt at present in his heart, but he would cure him completely for two pounds, which was accordingly paid.

"Now," said the doctor, "I shall give you some medicine which will bring the disease from your heart to your mouth, and you will be able to spit it out."

"He was right enough," said the patient; "but the more I spit the worse I get."

I returned shortly after this to Philippopolis, and stopped there some time before going to Perustitza. I mentioned before that the rich Bulgarians of Philippopolis had subscribed almost nothing for the relief of their suffering fellow-countrymen. More than this, they even asked for some of the stores for their own private uses that had been sent out for the poor. Amongst other things, some very pretty blankets came from Odessa. Mrs. G., seeing these, asked for a pair to keep a newly-arrived baby warm. Her request was granted. Next day several relations and friends of Mrs. G.'s, who were in an interesting condition, sent to know if they could have some also for their expected little ones.

After a short time I went to the village of Perustitza before mentioned, to arrange an hospital there which had been constructed out of some wooden huts that came from Marseilles. Some of the villagers were jealous at not being employed on the construction of this hospital, and one morning we discovered that the supports and framework of one of the huts had been sawn close to the ground, and the whole thing had to be made over again. The name of the perpetrator was known, but he was not to be found. The same course was suggested and followed as in the case of the arabajees at Tartar Bazardjick—the arrest of his relatives—and shortly after the culprit was taken and punished.

The cavass or guard at the hospital of Perustitza belonged

to a curious Mahomedan sect. These people believe that our Lord, Mahomet, and the prophets, are all equal; they never carry arms, and say that whosoever uses the sword will die by the sword. During the massacres these people had remained quietly in their village, and had perpetrated no outrages whatever. This man often prophesied to me that the people who had committed these massacres would suffer for the wrong they had done. When I returned to Philippopolis, before returning home, I met my friend the cavass, and he pointed out to me how his prophecy had been fulfilled.

The work in Bulgaria was now drawing to a close. Panagurista was one of the last places where a distribution of clothes was made. I worked hard for two days at this; and out of the 400 and odd people that received relief, not one of them uttered a word of thanks. I remarked this to one of their number who spoke French, and his answer was a true one, indeed.

"Yes," he said, "we have the word for thanks in the Bulgarian language, but it is not in the hearts of these people."

CHAPTER VI.

Constantinople Again—Caucasian Expedition—False Start—Off at Last—Crowded Steamer—Bad Weather and Good Temper—Trebizonde—Batoum—Soukoum Kaleh—Housekeeping—Bread-making—An Abbaze Bedside—Valley of the Kodor—Jealousy—Chamcharee—A Grateful Patient—Agreeable *Confrères*—Turkish Fleet to the Rescue.

THE Bulgarians had been relieved; the Servian war was over; and I returned to Constantinople in order to go to England. While I was waiting for the steamer, the Russo-Turkish war broke out. I therefore once more sought service with the Ottoman army, making it a condition that I should be sent to the front. One of the first incidents of the war was the temporary success at the since well-known town of Soukoum Kaleh, on the eastern extremity of the Black Sea. An expedition was being despatched to try and follow up the success achieved and to stir up the Mussulman population of the Caucasus to insurrection. I applied for service with this expedition, and received orders to leave Constantinople on the 21st of May, 1876, in the "Esseri Djid," bound for Soukoum Kaleh. As it is usual to make no provision for rationing troops on board a transport, each man is supplied, before leaving, with a stock of bread sufficient for the voyage, while each officer receives a certain amount of money to purchase whatever he considers will add to his personal comfort. The variety of these "self-rationing" arrangements can be more easily imagined than described. I had been told at the War Office that when I arrived on board ship I would find my "It-me-haber," or ticket, and my ration money waiting for me there. I went on board before the hour named for sailing, but found neither one nor the other; and, as I had no papers of identification with me, the captain refused to allow me to

remain. However, he said that the transport would not sail till late the next day, and I would, therefore, have plenty of time in the morning to make the necessary inquiries. On the morrow I presented myself to the Dari Shoura, and was given an officer to accompany me on board and arrange matters for me, but when we arrived at the place where we expected to find the "Esseri Djid," I was somewhat surprised to find she had started, knowing as I did the delay which is usual on such occasions. There was nothing left for me to do but return to my hotel to await the departure of another transport.

The next day I met a friend of mine—a correspondent—who was, like myself, bound for Soukoum Kaleh. He had been to the Minister of Marine to ask for a passage in the "Esseri Djid," but as he had been informed that she would probably be twenty days on the road, he determined to wait for another opportunity.

After waiting four days I got news very suddenly that a transport was on the point of starting, so I hurried on board at once. I found everything in a state of dreadful confusion. It was a small post-boat with accommodation for about ten first-class passengers, and when you know that there were about 2,000 soldiers on board you can easily picture what a state she was in. The men were standing or squatting cross-legged on the deck, so closely packed together that it was impossible to move about.

Two days after we left the Bosphorus it came on to blow very hard, which did not improve the condition of the poor fellows on deck—drenched with spray washing over them, and most of them sea-sick, theirs was indeed a miserable plight. However, not a grumble was to be heard; all were trying to look happy and contented.

The only rations served to the soldiers during the voyage were bread and water. Some few had provided various

addenda to this somewhat stinted diet. One, luckier than his fellows, had secured a box of figs, which he began dividing among his comrades. At last there was only one left; this he broke in two, and gave one-half away. He then looked round to see if all were served, and seeing a soldier eying the morsel somewhat longingly, handed it to him, having only for himself the satisfaction of having done a generous deed. This is no isolated case of good-feeling; again and again, times without end, have I seen instances of the same spirit of comradeship whilst serving with the Turkish army.

After four days we arrived at Trebizonde. I think anybody who made that voyage must have learned to respect the Turkish soldier as I had. In spite of all their discomforts they never grumbled; and, although these men belonged to several, and not to one, regiment, I never heard a cross word or saw any disposition whatever to quarrel.

The troops were destined for Kars, and therefore disembarked at Trebizonde. As the steamer entered the harbour the soldiers appeared in excellent spirits, in spite of the privations and hardships of the past few days, and shouted lustily the national hymn, "Choke Yasha Paddisha im"—*i.e.*, "Long live the Government."

As we had two days to wait, I went ashore to stretch my legs and have a "look round." As I approached the landing-place, I saw all the townspeople had turned out and were working away with great energy at the debarkation of the ammunition, guns, &c. The priests were there urging on the people both by word and by example. These usually indolent long-robed gentry might be seen struggling up the steep path that leads from the sea-shore to the town with heavy boxes of cartridges bound on their backs, and wearing their green turbans, which are emblematic of their office.

Trebizonde is beautifully situated on a promontory jutting

out into the Black Sea. The streets are wider and better paved than almost any Turkish town I ever was in.

I stayed in Trebizonde about two days, and after a voyage of about twelve hours arrived at Batoum. This well-known place is situated, so to speak, in the south-eastern angle of the Black Sea. It is an excessively dirty and most unhealthy place, being a very hotbed of fever—which is not to be wondered at, as the town is built on a flat tongue of land, very marshy, and not at all drained. The western side of the port is a shingly beach, while the eastern is formed of clay cliffs. South of the town, and close to it, is a line of hills which form a natural fortification, while further off are lofty mountains. East from Batoum the country is comparatively level as far as Poti. It is about nine miles from Batoum to the frontier on the sea-coast. The principal people who inhabit Batoum and its neighbourhood are known as Lazes. They are mostly employed as boatmen and sailors; are very active and muscular-looking fellows, and not at all likely to submit willingly to Russian rule. They are always armed—their principal weapon being a long curved knife, something like a Malay kreese.

I was obliged to wait two days in Batoum for a steamer to go on to Soukoum Kaleh. While I was there my friend arrived from Constantinople. He had contrived to get a passage in the Sultan's yacht from Trebizonde, and had naturally a quick and pleasant passage. As far as Trebizonde he had voyaged with the son of "Schamyl." This Circassian chief had left St. Petersburg for Constantinople immediately after the declaration of war, and had been despatched at once to the Caucasusto try and incite the Circassians to revolt. His followers—about six hundred cavalry—had been armed with heavy old-fashioned percussion guns, which it was almost impossible to use on horseback.

I met a Circassian Bey in Batoum who had been sent from Constantinople to distribute arms to the Circassians who were inclined to revolt against the Russians. He complained bitterly of the treachery of Abdul Kerim Pasha, the first Commander-in-Chief, and assured me that a quantity of the ammunition sent was useless, as it would not fit the guns. In many cases where Winchester repeating rifles had been sent they were accompanied by cartridges for the Martini-Henry rifle.

The name of the vessel on which I went from Batoum to Soukoum Kaleh was the "Esseri Tifek." The captain, Ismail Bey, was about the best specimen of a Turkish officer I ever met. As a young man he had served seven years in the English navy, and he spoke English perfectly. He was very kind to me, and I owe him a debt of gratitude for his good-nature and good advice.

As we approached Soukoum we saw plainly that the whole place had been completely ruined, only two buildings being left standing—*i.e.*, the hospital and custom-house—the former at the south-eastern and the latter at the north-western extremity of the town. The situation of Soukoum is very beautiful. The town is built on a level plain close to the sea. Immediately behind the town the hills commence—low at first, but successively rising higher and higher, like the steps of an amphitheatre, and clothed to their very summits with virgin forests, whose verdure becomes less distinct as the hills recede in the distance, and at last become merged in the far-off snow-capped peaks of the Caucasus.

My friend and I went ashore at once and called on the commander-in-chief of the expedition, Feizly Pasha. We found his Excellency in a small room in one of the least dilapidated of the houses. He was not so polite as he might have been, and sent us off to the hospital to look for quarters.

We went on board again and got our traps together, and rowed over to the hospital, which we found was a very fine structure, well built and airy, but it was so filthy, and the smell was so horrible, that we determined not to live there; and, accordingly, went back to the town to look for quarters. At last, after much searching, we found the remains of a cottage that would do. The roof was half off, and there were neither doors nor windows; but the weather was fine and the place was moderately clean; so we established ourselves there. Attached to our house was a fine orchard, and the garden was well stocked with plum trees. The owner of the place had evidently been a bootmaker, as all round the house was littered with lasts and other implements of the trade.

The people about Soukoum Kaleh are Circassians and belonged to the tribe called Abbazes. They were a wretchedly poor and miserable set, and Russian rule had apparently attempted nothing for their regeneration. Like all Circassians they would enter your house and receive your hospitality, as if it were a compliment to do so, but they would steal the spoons the minute your back was turned. It seems that the taking of Soukoum Kaleh was a mere bit of good luck. The Russian garrison was very small. I suppose after the failure of the expedition under Osman Pasha they did not expect another attack. A few Abbazes who had fled to Constantinople many years ago had landed and set fire to some of the houses, whereupon the garrison retreated and the Abbazes flocked in from the surrounding districts, and pillaged and burned the town. The place had been exceedingly well laid out, and possessed a very fine public promenade on the shore, and a beautiful botanical garden.

We were very short of provisions at Soukoum. The Abbazes were not inclined to sell their cattle, and we had

usually to go without meat. Again, as nearly all the ovens had been destroyed, it was difficult to bake bread, and accordingly flour was served out for our rations; and I had to become my own baker. I searched among the ruins of various houses and got the remains of several ovens, which I put together, and constructed a new one which, although not very first-class, served the purpose. The bread was not a success; it had a tendency to burn on the outside and to be underdone inside, but it was very filling.

The soldiers were very discontented at the inactivity of the general. The climate was abominable, and they saw their comrades dropping away day by day from fever and dysentery. "Why bring us here to die of sickness?" they said; "better let us die fighting the Moscov." But no; his Excellency had a good cook, and was happy, and what matter about the poor soldiers.

There was always a little skirmishing going on in the mountains between the Abbazes and the Mingrelians—some of the latter having joined the Russians—and occasionally a few wounded made their appearance. One day I was despatched by the general to visit a chief's son who had been wounded in one of these encounters. He lived in his village situated in the mountains, about five hours' distance from Soukoum Kaleh. I set out accordingly, early in the morning, accompanied by two Abbazes, brothers of the wounded man. Have you ever ridden for five hours over a rough road in a Circassian saddle? No. Well, don't try it. There is every chance of either rupturing yourself or breaking your neck. The saddle is made of wood, with very high pommels in front and behind; a thick leather cushion is strapped between the pommels, the strap passing under the horse's belly. Thus a very V-shaped seat is formed, out of which it is very difficult to rise once you are fixed in it.

The stirrup leathers are attached very far back, which throws one's knees up and forward, so that you are obliged to ride entirely with your feet. There was no attempt at a road, but only a narrow path, along which we rode in single file. The mountains look very lovely from the shore, but are more beautiful still when once you reach them. Everything seemed to grow with the greatest luxuriance, and the bracken and wild ferns reached over our horses' heads. We passed through several hamlets. I was surprised to see what a contrast the women were to the men—for, whereas the latter were excessively dirty and untidy, the former were quite the opposite, being dressed in clean chintz dresses, with their hair neatly plaited and coiled.

As we approached the village where the patient was, his father came out to meet me, and received me most courteously. The outside of the house looked very rude, indeed; it was built of wattles plastered with mud and roughly thatched with straw; it was surrounded by a broad verandah, where all the inmates of the village were collected to see the English hekim. If the outside of that house was squalid and dirty, the inside was a great contrast. The proprietors had evidently been at the sacking of Soukoum Kaleh, for the place was most elegantly furnished. On the muddy floor were Persian carpets, the rough wooden divan was covered with tapestry and silk yourghans, and the walls were adorned with pictures and very pretty mirrors in carved frames. I was offered a seat in a most comfortable and elegant arm-chair, that would not have disgraced a London drawing-room. I found my patient had a ball in his right ankle; so I gave him chloroform and extracted it. After I had finished, some maize cakes and "yaourt" (sour clotted milk) were brought in for my refreshment. This simple repast, which forms the staple food of the Circassians, was most elegantly served on a silver

tray. Amongst other trophies was a very fine musical box, which was set going for my especial benefit, and I had a selection from *Madame Angôt* to assist my digestion.

Our hospital was a very fine one; it was built by the Russians, and was just finished before the place fell into Turkish hands; it contained about 400 beds. The medical staff consisted of six doctors and numerous surgeons and dressers. I was very badly treated by the medical staff, who used to do everything in their power to annoy me, coming into my wards and changing the medicines and diet I had ordered, and telling the patients not to pay any attention to my directions. At last one day matters reached a climax. I had several cases of erysipelas, which I treated successfully with perchloride of iron. However, my *confrères* had never heard of such a treatment before, and thought fit to represent the matter to the chief of the hospital, who spoke to me about it. Of course I was considerably astonished and angered, and at once questioned the other doctors why they objected to my following a certain line of treatment if I thought fit to do so, but they all denied ever having spoken about the matter. I returned and told the chief, who summoned all the doctors to his presence. I suggested that either was lying, and inquired which, so they had to declare that they did object to my treatment, but confessed they never had heard of it before. This little outburst had the effect of making my *confrères* a little less annoying, and I was not sorry it had occurred.

The most difficult patients we had to deal with were the Arabs, three battalions of whom formed part of the expedition. They used to suffer as a rule from skin diseases brought on by want of cleanliness. At last it got intolerable; our lives were made a burden to us by the complaints of these dirty fellows, who would do anything but that which was neces-

sary—*i.e.*, wash themselves. At last the matter was represented to the higher authorities, and the patients were marched down twice a day to a large pool of fresh water formed by the embouchure of a small river, under a guard, and made to bathe. They were very indignant at the idea, and thought the originator of the scheme—your humble servant—far exceeded his Satanic majesty in wickedness.

I often repeated my visits to the Abbaze villages, and during one of these trips I passed up the valley of the Kodor, a river which runs into the Black Sea south of Soukoum Kaleh. It is the most beautiful valley one can possibly imagine; the sides of it are formed of cliffs of chalk nearly a thousand feet high, which are hollowed out like an amphitheatre. On the ledges thus formed, the beech, oak, and sycamore have found a precarious footing, and here and there they have grown too heavy for the support offered, and have toppled over; but still living and green, mingled together in the wildest confusion, have formed natural bridges over the torrent which rushes below. The contrast formed by the varied foliage of these trees against the background of the white cliffs is very beautiful, and a visit to this valley of the Kodor will amply repay the adventurous one who has the courage to undertake it.

The second in command of the expedition, Houssein Pasha, had moved down the coast to a place called Chamcharee, where he had established himself in a stockaded camp. On the 27th of June the Russians completely surrounded the position by land, and left only the sea for the Turks to retreat by. For seventeen hours they continued to attack the camp, but gained no advantage whatever. Our troops numbered between 6,000 and 7,000, while theirs were estimated at 12,000. Our fellows fought splendidly, one battalion especially distinguishing itself—*i.e.*, the Yildiz Tabur. This battalion

had been raised by a private individual at Constantinople, who equipped and paid them at his own expense. They were all volunteers. The great danger was lest the ammunition should run out; that did happen at one period of the fight, but the Yildiz refused to go back for more, and when urged to do so by their officers, declared it should be brought to them where they fought. Out of the 700 or 800 men composing the Yildiz Tabur, over 200 were wounded, and I cannot say how many killed.

At this action an Abbaze chief, an aide-de-camp of the Pasha's, was wounded. As I had a room empty the general asked me to take care of him. That was all right, but all his kindred used to come and live on me, so that I had to remonstrate, and he sent them all away, keeping only his "sud cardash"—foster-brother—to attend on him. This latter was quite a wild creature; he had never seen a watch, and used to sit entranced with mine to his ear listening to the ticking of it. However, he did not end well. One morning I went to take my bath and found that my sponge had been stolen. As there was no one but the Circassians who could have done it, I showed the chief and his foster-brother the door.

Shortly after the expulsion of the chief and his amiable foster-brother, the weather began to get very hot. I determined to get a tent to live in, and went prospecting for a place to put it up. I fixed on the garden of the late governor of the town. He had built a sea wall, with white marble steps leading down into the sea, and within it the garden was laid out. There had formerly been flower-beds and flowers *ad lib.*, but now only one bed of verbenas existed, and some beautiful acacia trees, which cast an agreeable shade over my canvas home. My servant constructed a shelter for himself in the ruins of the old house. I lived a very

patriarchal life under the shade of the aforesaid acacia trees.

One of the plum trees in the garden in front of my door bore a splendid crop, and I was very careful of the fruit, as it formed a pleasant addition to my somewhat stinted diet. One day, when I came home from hospital, I saw a Circassian quietly seated in the tree devouring the plums. I remonstrated with him, but it was no use.

"The tree," he said, "belongs to me as much as to you."

"Very well," I said; and I sent my servant down to the depôt of the regiment for two soldiers. When he was gone I went into the house and got a saw and a stool, and, sitting down comfortably at the foot of the tree, began to cut. C-r-r-i-k, c-r-r-r-a-k! and the tree began to go; whereupon the Circassian began to remonstrate, and called on me to desist; but, said I, "The tree belongs to me as much as to you;" and I continued sawing. A little more and both tree and Circassian came down with a crash. I think it was lucky for me that the soldiers just arrived at this minute, as the Circassian was inclined to get nasty, but seeing them he beat a hasty retreat.

I thought the little disagreement I had with the doctors at the hospital quite ended everything of the kind, when a circumstance arose which caused me to leave it. I had a case in my ward on which we decided it was necessary to amputate the arm. Accordingly the day was fixed and everything was prepared, and the patient was put on the table. Up to this I had not the faintest idea what was going to occur. I took the knife and was going to cut, when the chief of the hospital stopped me, saying—

"You will tie the arteries."

I said, "No; it is my case. I am going to amputate."

He replied that he would not allow me to do so. "Vous n'êtes pas capable."

I saw at once that the matter was arranged as a direct insult to me. I said nothing, but put on my coat and walked out of the place. I went straight to the commander-in-chief and told him of what had occurred, and of my determination never to return to the hospital. He was very angry with the chief, and said he would send me to Chamcharee to be out of his reach.

The next day I was sitting in my tent when the second doctor, one Izzet Bey—a man with the rank of colonel—came to me with a very grave face, and said that he would put me in possession of some money if I would consent to divide it with him. Not knowing what he meant, I refused; and after a while he unfolded the following interesting plot to me. It was about the passage money. It had been sent on board the ship I had missed. The captain who had brought it had stolen two medjidies (nine francs), and had delivered the rest, twenty medjidies, to Hire Effendi, the chief apothecary, who came to Soukoum with Izzet Bey. They agreed between them that if I should claim the money I was to receive only half of it, and if I did not claim it I was to get nothing at all. It appeared that Hire Effendi had received a present of a large bottle of raki from Constantinople which he had shared with Izzet Bey, who lived in the same tent with him. When it was finished he asked Izzet Bey to pay for it, and insisted on his doing so, and the Bey in revenge unfolded this tale to me. I asked Hire Effendi for the money, but he denied all knowledge of it. I reported the matter to the Dari Shoura (medical council) and the commander-in-chief, but they seemed to think it was a good joke, and that Hiré Effendi was a sharp fellow.

The next day I left for Chamcharee. It is the most

unhealthy place I ever was in. There were about sixty new patients every morning with ague or dysentery. The Russians were very close to us—not more than four hundred yards off—and at times they used to make it very lively. While I was here I was sent out a couple of times with reconnaissance parties. As there were very few horses I was obliged to march on foot, carrying a knapsack full of bandages, &c. As I said, the country was very thick, and we had to advance very cautiously. We passed a good many deserted villages; all the houses were elevated from the ground on piles and were much better built than those I saw in the immediate neighbourhood of Soukoum Kaleh. They belonged to the Mingrelians who had joined the Russians.

Returning from one of these expeditions, I heard that Hobart Pasha had arrived, and I went at once to see him. I got a hint that the place was about to be abandoned; and two nights after we were ordered to transport the wounded and sick two miles up the beach to a large shed used for drying bricks.

When we arrived at the shed in question, we were ordered to be ready to embark at a moment's notice. However, as I had had some experience of Turkish orders, I determined to make myself comfortable; so I put up a small tent which I had, and lit a fire and made some tea, and then turned in. Just before daylight they commenced to embark the troops. All the work was done by the sailors; and in less than twenty-four hours all the seven thousand troops, with their baggage, guns, &c., were on board—not so much as a bag of biscuits being left for the Russians. It appears that the Pasha went on board at eleven o'clock and left no military officer to replace him; so the beach and camp for the greater part of the time during which the evacuation took place were commanded by Hobart Pasha's flag-captain.

There are some who say that the Turkish fleet did not do much during this war. To such I would suggest that as the Russians have almost no navy, the Turkish ships had nothing to oppose them on their own element, that most of the Turkish transport service during the war was performed by the navy, and that the emigration of the Circassians from Soukoum Kaleh, to the number of over forty-five thousand persons, was entirely effected by the same means. I feel sure that if Hobart Pasha had not come to our relief at Chamcharee, we should have had to choose between being driven into the sea, cut to pieces, or taken prisoners.

We returned to Soukoum and found the place crowded with Circassian families preparing to emigrate. It was the story exactly of Osman Pasha's expedition over again. It was calculated that there were twenty-five thousand families of these people to be transported to Turkish territory. They had an immense number of cattle with them, which of course it was impossible to transport; so they killed them and left them there to rot.

I found that the "Belle of Dunkirque" had arrived at Soukoum. This ship was sent out by the National Aid Society; she was laden with medical stores, comforts, &c. The commissioner, Mr. Young, determined to take a cargo of wounded to Constantinople, and procured leave from the Pasha for me to go in charge of the patients—an opportunity of which I was only too glad to avail myself, having had nearly enough of the Circassian expedition. We took on board some sixty-five cases—all of them very serious ones; and after seven days' voyage, during which time we had, providentially, the most beautiful weather, we arrived in Constantinople, where the wounded were handed over to the care of the authorities at Haidar Pasha Hospital.

CHAPTER VII.

Stafford House and Red Crescent—Adrianople—Dishonest Contractor—Difficulties of Organisation — Start — Mustapha Pasha — Fording the Maritza—Zeibecks—Yeni Zaghra—Eski Zaghra—Foraging—Corpses by the Wayside — Kezanlik — Schipka — First Transport — A Wonderful Patient—Philippopolis—An Energetic Governor—Hangings—An "Unspeakable" Turk.

ONCE more in Constantinople, I determined to leave the actual Turkish service, and enter an ambulance connected with one of the societies which were working for the relief of the Turkish sick and wounded. I applied to my friend, Mr. Barrington Kennet, of the Stafford House Committee, and was employed by him. This committee was at that time working in conjunction with the Red Crescent Society—Stafford House supplying doctors, medicines, and medical stores, the other paying the working and all other necessary expenses.

I was therefore handed over to the Red Crescent, and was sent to the army of Suleiman Pasha, then fighting at the Schipka Pass, to endeavour to establish a service for the transport of wounded to the rear. My companions were Dr. Weller—like myself, in Stafford House employ—Lieutenant Banfather and Mr. Smith, volunteers.

Our first destination was Adrianople, where I proposed buying carts and horses necessary for our work. The day after we arrived, I made a contract with a Greek carriage-builder for the construction of twelve carts, each one capable of holding three wounded men; they were to be finished and delivered in five days. The construction of them was very simple indeed. He was to procure the lower part, wheels, and springs, of so many "britskas," or carts of the country,

and make new bodies to be placed on these. The contract was signed and part of the price paid as pledge-money.

The next morning he came to the hotel where I was staying, and said he would not complete the contract, and offered me back the pledge-money, which, however, I refused to accept, and determined to go to the commander-in-chief, Jamil Pasha, and tell him about the affair; and, as he was hanging people pretty freely at that time, I knew the Greek was in wholesome fear of him. That evening, about an hour after returning from the "Konak," having seen the Pasha, the contractor came and said he would do whatever I wanted, but prayed me not to let the Pasha have anything to do with it.

The most difficult part of the work was the buying of horses. Most of the draught horses had been pressed for Government service, and it was, therefore, necessary to buy riding horses, and train them to draw the carts.

The number of upsets, accompanied by broken shafts and harness, that marked this interesting process is beyond computation. Every evening we repaired to a green field outside the town to tame these fiery steeds. It was most diverting, and was a great source of amusement to us all.

At last I got the full complement of horses, and proceeded to engage drivers. These were principally Greeks and Armenians, with one Jew, who, although very stupid, was useful as being a butt for the others, and a continual source of amusement.

The day we started we had a whole chapter of accidents. One of my companions was a little late at starting, and as he came galloping after us, a donkey crossed his path, and succeeded in upsetting and being upset by horse and rider, who rolled over and over. When the rider got to his feet again I saw he was covered with what I thought was blood, but it

turned out to be cherry brandy—a flask of which he had slung over his shoulder when he fell, and which was smashed to bits.

A little further on one of the horses, which was not well broken, bolted with an ambulance cart, and was only brought to by running his head against a wall.

Just outside the town is a marsh of black mud, which the road traverses on a causeway built with rough stones. Crossing this the Jew went to sleep, and the horse, left unguided, walked off it into the mud, upsetting the cart and burying the Hebrew up to his neck. He presented a most ludicrous figure when he got out—his red hair absolutely standing on end, his cheeks streaming with tears of penitence and fear, and his body encased in a well-fitting suit of the aforesaid black mud.

We passed our first night at Mustapha Pasha, situated about seven hours from Adrianople. The place was crowded with Bashi-bazouks and Circassians; so we had some difficulty in finding a khan for our horses. I produced a large firman with the Sultan's seal done in gold, and a place was cleared for us at once.

The next evening, just after dark, we reached Tirinova-Semenly. It is here that the branch line going to Yeni Zaghra and Yamboli crosses the river Maritza. As our road on the morrow would lie on the other side of river, we thought it better to attempt the ford at once. The river here is about sixty yards wide, and three feet and a-half deep in the middle. We all got over safely, except the last two carts. The horses, becoming frightened, commenced plunging and kicking, and finally reared and fell over; and we were obliged to cut them free of the carts to prevent their being drowned. To do this we were obliged to dismount from our horses and work in the river; the consequence was we passed a rather damp evening.

We found the village crowded with refugees, and were obliged to requisition a "baccal" (grocer's shop) to sleep in. Most of these refugees were from the district of Eski Zaghra, and fled before Gourko when he made his celebrated raid.

The next day we went as far as Karabounar. We met lots of Circassians and Bashi-bazouks returning from the front with plunder. They seemed to have looted pretty freely. Most of them were walking, their horses being laden to excess. Some of them were wounded; and one drove along in great state in an American buggy, which I recognised as having been the property of one of my missionary friends from Eski Zaghra.

We halted for the night outside this village of Karabounar. As we were sitting after supper smoking, a Zeibeck rode up and offered me a horse, which he informed me was a true Arab which he had brought from Asia Minor. But, another recognition! it was one belonging to another American missionary. The Zeibeck seemed rather taken aback when I suggested that he had stolen it at Eski Zaghra.

These Zeibecks are great robbers and scoundrels, but are very finely built and extremely handsome men. They come from a mountainous district near Smyrna. They are exempt from taxes; I suspect even if it were law for them to pay, he would be a courageous tax-gatherer who would venture among them. Their dress is very picturesque. They wear very short loose breeches, generally blue or white, reaching from the hip to above the knee; a very large coloured shawl or scarf is worn round the waist and extends nearly up to their armpits; a white linen shirt, with short sleeves reaching to the elbow, and a coloured cloth jacket highly ornamented with braid, with wide open sleeves, completes their costume. Their fez is very peculiar, being tall and quite stiff. They wear sandals, and stockings reaching to a little below the knee,

which is therefore bare like a Highlander's. They carry a variety of useless and cumbrous arms, worn Oriental fashion in the girdle; but most of them, in addition, carry a Winchester repeating rifle. What their fighting capabilities are I do not know, but I hear they are great cowards. I suppose, like all of their class, they do not shine in regular warfare.

As I said, we met numbers of Circassians coming from the front. Their favourite loot is cattle and horses; and it was not uncommon to meet two or three of these thieves driving off 50 or 60 or even 100 head of fine cattle. These, I was told, they brought to Constantinople and sold.

"But how," asked I, "are they allowed by the authorities to pass through large towns and villages—which they must do—without being stopped?"

"Oh, that is easy enough. If the governor will not take a bribe to let them pass, they threaten to burn several villages in his district, knowing that if they do so, and are prosecuted or imprisoned, they will be protected by their women in the harems at Constantinople."

Of all the curses of Turkey, I believe the Circassians have been the greatest. Nearly all the robberies and outrages perpetrated in times of peace, and almost all mutilations in time of war, have been the work of their hands.

We arrived in Yeni Zaghra long after dark; and, taking a wrong road, arrived at the outskirts of the camp furthest from head-quarters; so, much against our will, we were compelled to wait for nearly an hour till permission arrived for us to enter the lines. I was much surprised, on going to see the officer in command, to find my old friend Naschief Bey, late governor of Tartar Bazardjick.

The next day we reached Eski Zaghra. Here the work of destruction had been completely carried out; hardly a house had been left entire, and the market-place and shops

were altogether destroyed; the streets were blocked up with burnt rafters and broken furniture, the *débris* of the houses. It had first been occupied by the Turks; then taken by the Russians, and twice re-occupied by the Turks; so it had suffered three times. Save three or four zaptiehs or policemen and ourselves, the place was quite deserted. However, there was plenty of food to be found—fowls, vegetables, fruit, grain, wine, &c.; and as we had been rather short for some days, we made up for lost time. During our stay there the ambulance, consisting of about twenty persons, ate upwards of 140 fowls.

There were a great many dead bodies, both of Bulgarians and Turks, lying unburied about the town and on the sides of the roads in the neighbourhood of Eski Zaghra. For all these deaths the Russians are answerable. Gourko descended with a flying column, which was plainly insufficient to insure any success he might obtain. On the approach of the Russians the Turkish population fled, and the Bulgarians rose and murdered all the Turks they could find, and pillaged and burned their villages; then the Russians were forced to retreat, and the Turks returned and retaliated on the Bulgarians. Between them they managed to nearly "wipe out" each other.

The fertile plain of Eski Zaghra, which had been before the war a picture of rural happiness and prosperity, possessed of upwards of one hundred thriving villages, was burned to a heap of ruins.

We left early the next morning to cross the range of hills that separates the "long valley"—*i.e.*, that which stretches from Slivno to Dervent—from the great plain of Philippopolis. The road was dreadful; we had simply to drag the ambulance carts up a steep like the bed of a stream, in the course of which we crossed several rivers. We were pretty tired when we got

to the other side, and halted to rest near a grove of beautiful elm trees, which afforded us a very agreeable shade. Our waggons were drawn up so as to form three sides of a square, the horses knee-hobbled, a guard set, and, after our frugal lunch of bread and grapes, we lay down for a nap. When it was time to start again, one of the horses could not be caught; he had slipped his hobble, and refused all our friendly advances. By-and-by some Circassians came along, and for two francs they agreed to recover our erratic steed. Approaching from different sides, four of them drew near the horse, who, when they were within a few yards of him, threw up his heels, gave a whinny, and attempted to make off; but, too late! One of the Circassians was armed with a lasso, which he used beautifully; we saw it shooting out; the loop dropped over the truant's neck—the same moment the Circassian spurred his horse in the opposite direction, and the runaway measured his length on the grass.

It has been my fate to see a good many dreadful sights during the last two years, but the one that is most deeply fixed in my memory is what I saw when first I entered Kezanlik. The wounded, dead, and dying were lying so thickly in the streets that it was not possible to ride along. I was obliged to dismount and tie up my horse. Some of these poor fellows had been in this condition for three or four days, and some had not had their wounds dressed for nine. We calculated that there were 3,000 wounded in the town, and to tend this mass of men we had only about six Turkish doctors and one dozen surgeons or dressers. A good many of these unfortunate soldiers had been struck in the head, and were rolling about in the mud, groaning and shrieking, covered with filth and gore; some, exhausted, were lying stretched on the pavement, almost lifeless; some propped up against the walls; and, worse still, bullock carts laden with more were

arriving every minute. These were deposited on the side of the street, and left there till somebody took pity on and relieved them, or till death put an end to their sufferings. We selected the worst cases, and endeavoured to do something for them, but it was almost impossible, one was so distracted by the cries and supplications for help coming from their less fortunate comrades.

Early next morning I went out to the camp at Schipka, to ask the general to do something to relieve the sufferings of the wounded in Kezanlik; but as he had gone up to one of the positions, I was unable to see him.

Schipka, of which we have heard so much during the late war, was before that time a most beautiful place. From Kezanlik, which is situated due south, you cross a level plain for about two miles and a half, when you enter a belt of forest about half a mile in width. On emerging from this, a level plain stretches about three miles to the foot of the Balkans, where the town of Schipka is situated. The army of Suleiman Pasha was encamped on this plain—encamped is hardly a fair word, for there was not a tent to be seen. Their march had been so hurried that they were obliged to leave all their heavy baggage behind; so their only bed was mother earth, their only roof the open canopy of heaven. Even the general himself slept in the open on the side of a small tumulus in the middle of the plain, and the British Military Attaché lay in a bullock cart. In the belt of forest before mentioned were two villages, and in one of these the doctors of the English ambulances had their quarters. The village was called "Shekirly," or the "Sugary" village, from the amount of plum trees in and around it. Standing on the plain in the Turkish lines, the whole of the disputed passage and the positions of the contending parties were plainly to be seen. Following the windings of the road up you arrived at the

Russian stronghold, Fort St. Nicholas. On either side, right and left, were the Turkish fortifications; and high up in the centre, right under the Russians, were the rifle-pits the Turks had constructed with a view of advancing to attack the enemy. During the day the puffs of smoke might be seen bursting from the fortifications, and by night the flash of rifle and cannon shot formed a prelude to the roar of artillery and the sharp whistle of the bullets.

There was a great deficiency of transport for the wounded from the height where the fighting was to the plain below. Poor fellows with lacerated limbs were obliged to work their way down, leaning on their rifles, and many died on the hill-side from want of proper attention, or mayhap a little water! I went up to one of the positions after an attack had taken place. The dead were lying thickly in every conceivable position—stretched out; doubled up; on their faces, with hands tightly clenching the grass; on their backs, looking calmly up to the blue vault, where their spirits perchance had long since fled; propped up against a tree, or in the bushes which had stayed their downward course after the fatal wound was received.

In the evening the Pasha came back to camp, and I went to see him. He told me that he was going to evacuate the wounded at once on Philippopolis. He offered me every facility for my work, gave me *carte blanche* for arabas (bullocks' waggons) for the purpose of transport, and for drawing rations for my ambulance employées and the wounded I might have under my charge.

Next day I procured fifty bullock arabas, which held four men each. It was a terrible scene loading those arabas with wounded. Already the English doctors had made a name for their attention to the wounded, and we were surrounded by hundreds of poor fellows eager to go to the rear under our

charge. We selected the worst cases that would bear transport; and when we had laid in provisions for the journey, started.

We had some officers among our patients. One of these was a colonel of artillery. On starting, as was due to his age—he was over sixty-five—and position, we made him as comfortable as possible; but after we had gone a distance of some two hours, he ordered his horse, and was assisted on to it by his two servants. That evening, when we halted for the night at the village of Kutchukly, I offered my services to the colonel to dress his wounds. He smiled and held out his right arm, of which, when I took off the bandages, I found he had a compound fracture. I dressed the wound and was about to go, when he presented his left arm for inspection, and I found the back of his elbow had been blown away. I settled it, and again prepared to leave, when he spoke to his servant, who lifted up his shirt and displayed a large shell wound in his back. He had, I afterwards discovered, in addition to these, a cut in the head and a small flesh wound on either thigh. He told me that his wounds had not been dressed for nine days, and I readily believed him, for they were crawling with huge maggots, and it was necessary to use pure carbolic acid in order to destroy them. Each time I dressed his wounds—twice a day—he cried and kissed my hands, saying that Allah would surely reward me for my kindness. He continued his journey on horseback for two days more, nearly as far as Philippopolis, where he overtook a comfortable phaeton returning, in which he could sit upright. He mounted it, and drove off in great glee to the hospital. I never saw him again, as he went on a few days afterwards to Constantinople, and I returned to the front.

The road from Kezanlik to Philippopolis passes through the once flourishing town of Calofer. I had often visited the

place when it was in a prosperous condition, but now I found it a heap of ruins, with hardly a wall left standing. When I arrived in Philippopolis things had sadly altered; there was a regular reign of terror existing; nearly all the principal Bulgarian inhabitants were in prison, and hangings took place every morning with great regularity. All this misery was perpetrated by one man, Ibrahim Pasha, brother-in-law of the Sultan. You could not go into the market any morning without seeing several corpses dangling in front of the shops in the bazaars. This Ibrahim Pasha was a perfect brute, and behaved as cruelly to his own troops as he did to the Bulgarian population of Philippopolis. On one occasion I arrived there with a large transport of wounded. I rode on in front, in order to prepare a place for them. I went first to this Pasha, who was military governor, and told him that the wounded were close at hand, and asked him where I was to put them when they arrived. He ordered an officer to accompany me and show me the place. With this intelligent officer I wandered about for some time, till at last I asked him what he was looking for. His reply was for a place to put the wounded in for the chief of the hospitals. As this was rather ambiguous, I suggested he should find what he was looking for, and when he had found that, come and tell me at the English consulate, whither I then bent my steps. As he did not appear soon, I went once more to Ibrahim Pasha, and asked him if he had yet found the place for the wounded. He replied rather rudely that he was too busy to speak to me, and that I must call again. I came back in half an hour, and repeated my question, whereupon he said I must go again and look for a place, which I refused to do, saying I was not governor of the town, but an agent of transport, and that it was impossible for me to arrange hospitals at such short notice. He ordered me out, and sent for

the chief of the hospitals, and instructed him to prepare a place for the wounded. When they arrived I conducted them to the place to which I had been ordered by the chief doctor of the town to bring them—*i. e.*, to the top of one of the hills on which Philippopolis is built. When I arrived there, an orderly of the general's rode up, and gave me some impertinence, for which I knocked him off his horse. I was obliged to lead the transport train down the hill again, the poor fellows groaning and shrieking as they were jolted over the rough stones.

In Philippopolis I purchased eighteen more carts, which brought our number up to thirty—quite as many as we could manage with our limited staff. Our life was rather a humdrum and a very hard one. We rose before daylight to see the horses fed and watered, and as soon as day broke we got the wounded into the carts, and started. We halted about 11 o'clock, and fed the patients and dressed their wounds; we rested all the heat of the day till about 4 o'clock, when we went on again; we stopped usually for the night about 7 o'clock, when fires were lighted and food prepared for supper. While it was cooking we changed the dressings of the wounded, and it was generally after 9 o'clock when we got our work finished, and eagerly sought our supper and our beds. The former was frugal, and the latter a stretcher or a waterproof sheet spread under a convenient tree near our camp fire. Going to bed, or "turning in," as we called it, consisted generally in taking off one's spurs, and pulling on a pair of breeches and coat of flannel, and wrapping oneself in one's blanket. As the flames of the fire grew smaller and smaller, throwing long shadows of the trees on the grass, and casting a dim, ghost-like light on the sleeping forms around us, tired out with the fatigues and heat of the day, we dropped off to sleep.

Our ambulance continued the work of transporting wounded for some time between Kezanlik and Schipka. The last time I was in the camp was just before poor Lieutenant Layard died, and I rode over to the village of Shekirly, where he was lying, to see him. As a descent of the Russians was not improbable, I had left one of our carts, in order to transport him out of the place if such a necessity should arise. When I entered the cottage where he lay, I found he was covered with some cloaks, as his bed-clothes were being washed. I thought he would be more comfortable with a blanket, and I asked his Greek servant to lend him his, but he refused to do so, saying that if the sick man had it he would have nothing to cover himself, and would get cold. I was very much disgusted at his selfishness, and I went over to where the driver of the cart was—a Turkish boy called Nourris, about seventeen years old. I found him very bad with ague, shivering on the ground, wrapped in his blanket in the cold stage of the fever.

"Nourris," I said, "do you know that the English Chellibi is very sick?"

"Yes," he answered; "but, please God, he will get well."

"No, I think, he never will; I fear he will die."

"Well, Allah versin." (It is the will of God.)

"Nourris," I said, "the Chellibi is very cold; he has no blanket to cover him."

Struggling up from the ground the lad handed his blanket to me, saying, with an effort to smile—

"Take it for him—he is worse than me."

Such is one of the numerous examples I have met with of charity and unselfishness on the part of the "unspeakable and barbarous Turk."

Arriving one evening very late in Kezanlik, I went straight to the "Memour," or chief of the commissariat, to draw rations

for the men and horses. I found a new one had been appointed, who refused to let me have what I wanted, although his staff were perfectly well acquainted with me. I went off to our depôt and got the "firman" which I had for drawing rations, and sent it to the Memour by the ambulance sergeant, to whom I gave some money, with directions to offer to pay for the rations, and to show the firman afterwards. The bait took. The corrupt official accepted the money, and gave an order for the rations—in fact, sold the Government stores; but he was mightily discomfited when he was shown the "firman," and handed back the money at once in a great fright.

One day while I was standing in the railway station at Philippopolis, when the train came in from Bazardjick, Mr. Gay, of the *Daily Telegraph*, who had just been into Plevna, arrived by it. He gave a dismal account of the state of the wounded there, and advised me to start at once for the place. I telegraphed to the committee, and received leave to go.

The night before I left Philippopolis I made rather a curious discovery. As the weather had previously been very hot I was accustomed to sleep out in the verandah, but as this night was cold I removed my bed into the room; while doing so, I inadvertently turned the mattress upside down and jumped into bed. I got out again rather quickly, as I had hurt my shin against something hard. I turned down the sheets and felt, and found a rifle had been concealed in the mattress. I cut it out, and it is now in my possession. Some "Bulgarian Comita," doubtless, fearing detection, had hid it there.

CHAPTER VIII.

Start for Sofia—Bazardjick—Ichtiman—Sofia—Tash Kessin—Orkhanié—With the Army—Old Friends—Broken Bridge—Sheep-stealing—Tellisch—Plevna—Osman Pasha—Yablovitza—Greek Soldiers—Shoeless Horses—A Rude Recall—Sofia Again—Companions Fall Ill—Jew of Eski Zaghra—Gallows Ending.

THE road which leads to Tartar Bazardjick from Philippopolis is one of the best in the whole country; it runs over perfectly level ground, and the construction of it was not attended with many difficulties. From Bazardjick to Ichtiman, on the contrary, is both difficult and bad. As far as Vetern it is fairly level and good; but after that it crosses one of the two ranges of hills that stretch between Tartar Bazardjick and Sofia.

We halted at Vetern, as was our custom, to rest the horses at midday. While we were sitting at lunch in the khan they began making preparations for hanging a Bulgarian in front of the place where we were. A hole was dug, and a rudely-constructed gallows put up; and shortly after the unfortunate culprit made his appearance, accompanied by the executioner—a brutal-looking gipsy. The prisoner appeared very miserable; he was very pale, but calm and unconcerned; his clothes were in rags; and he looked very thin and emaciated. A priest attended him; and after they had prayed together, a rope was thrown over the horizontal bar of the gallows and fastened round his neck with a slip-knot. His hands were then tied behind his back, and he was put standing on a chair. Another moment and the chair was kicked from under him, the rope was pulled up, and all was over. He seemed to die a perfectly painless death; there was no struggling whatever.

About three o'clock, when we had got the horses harnessed again, we left. As I was passing the gallows, the executioner before mentioned was standing in front of it contemplating his handiwork with a satisfied grin on his countenance, saying, "Apherim" (Well done), and calculating what the poor wretch's clothes were worth, as they were his (the hangman's) perquisites.

After leaving Vetern, the road begins to ascend, and, after passing Palanka, a village situated on the top of the first ascent, passes through a gorge five or six miles long. The hills surrounding this pass are very precipitous; and the road would be very difficult to force were it defended by a few hundred resolute men. The descent into the plain of Ichtiman is much easier and more gradual; and about two and a quarter hours from the foot of the pass you reach that town.

Ichtiman is a prosperous place, with a mixed population of Bulgarians, Greeks, and Turks, and presents the usual characteristics of a Turco-Bulgarian town—a long straggling street, badly paved, full of deep ruts in summer, and covered with a foot of mud in winter; shops on either side, with a broad counter opening on the street, and shutters, fastened with hinges above, which are raised during the day, forming a protection against the sun or rain. This central thoroughfare also contains the mosque, the Greek or Bulgarian church, and usually the Konak, or Government house, and the principal khans. Off it branch small narrow lanes, which lead to the outskirts of the town, where the folds are situated, into which the cattle, the property of the townsfolk, are driven every evening.

The journey from Ichtiman to Sofia occupies about eleven hours (about 35 miles). As far as the village of Vackerel the road is easy, but from there you begin to mount the line of hills before mentioned, which you must pass in order to

descend into the plain of Sofia. The ascent is comparatively easy, but the descent is somewhat difficult. Here the road does not pass through any gorge, as described between Tartar Bazardjick and Ichtiman, but leads along the summit of the hills, and does not present nearly so many difficulties as the one before mentioned. Near the summit a narrow road branches off, which leads to Tash Kessin, situated at the foot of the Orkhanié and Etropol passes.

The valley of Sofia is one of the most fertile in European Turkey, but, unlike most of the others, does not grow any grapes; on account of its being so elevated the vines do not flourish there. It raises enormous quantities of wheat, barley, maize, &c. The valley is over twenty-five miles long, and is studded in all directions with flourishing villages. Sofia with its district is peculiar in having especially good roads, and this it owes to the energy and enterprise of Midhat Pasha, who was governor of the district some years ago. Sofia is a large, well-built town, and—being, as it is, the centre of a flourishing district—a rich one. Its principal trade is in grain, hides, and wool. It possesses natural hot springs, and has extensive coal mines close to it, which, for some unaccountable reason, have never been utilized. A railway was projected and partly finished as far as Sofia; but, like every other Government enterprise in Turkey, it failed on account of the dishonesty of the Turkish officials, and hundreds of families were ruined in consequence. Many people had taken contracts for the construction of certain parts of the line, and had paid money as a pledge of good faith and execution of their contract, and in working expenses, &c. The Government agent appointed to receive this money quietly put it in his pocket, and the railway was abandoned for the time being, nor has the working of it since been resumed.

The Turkish Government had collected great stores of pro-

visions, &c., at Sofia, but they were, I regret to say, never applied to the uses of the Turkish soldiers. I was at Adrianople not long since, and, in the course of a conversation with one of the Russian commissariat officers whom I met there, he informed me that they had seized flour enough at Sofia to make bread for 50,000 men for six months, and clothes and boots sufficient to equip 45,000. This is very much to be deplored when we learn that, at the time the Turks retreated from Tash Kessin, they were almost without food and very badly clad.

While I was in Sofia I tried to get some money from the agent of the Ottoman Bank, a Jew; but I found great difficulty in obtaining what I wanted. The Jews, it appears, fearing the approach of the Russians, had sent all their valuables and money away to Kemia; and for this reason all the plunder, that had been taken by the Bashi-bazouks at Carlovo, Calofar, Eski Zaghra, Kezanlik, &c., had been brought to Sofia and sold to the Hebrew bankers; and this the Bulgarians were perfectly aware of, so the Jews came to the conclusion that, when the Russians arrived, there would be more or less confusion, and they would lose all their ill-gotten gains.

From Sofia we journeyed to Tash Kessin, a distance of from 18 to 20 miles, and that over a road that was a striking contrast to most of those we had previously experienced. The village is situated at the foot of a line of hills which you must cross in order to descend into another valley before reaching the Orkhanié Pass. This valley is about 10 miles long and 2 miles broad. It was here we first began to encounter the masses of refugees who were fleeing before the advancing Russians. They came mostly from the direction of Somova and Loftscha, and most of them appeared in a very miserable condition, having been from three to four months on the road.

It was easy to see that many of their number were sick; and the newly-made graves that marked their halting places and were scattered along the roadside, showed too plainly that the busy hand of death had been among them. Here and there you saw a full-sized grave, and beside it two little ones, telling plainly of a mother and her children resting side by side—victims of the merciless hand of war. The Circassians appeared to suffer much less than the Turks, and always appeared driving no inconsiderable amount of flocks and herds before them, the romantic character of the life they were leading appearing to agree with them.

After crossing this valley, you arrive at the foot of the Orkhanié Pass. The ascent is very steep, indeed, and we had great difficulty in getting our ambulance carts up to the top, so bad was the condition of the road. On the summit of the Pass is situated the well-known position of Kammarli. It took us many hours to descend the Pass, so crowded was it with refugees. We calculated that we passed about 30,000 of these unfortunate people between Sofia and Orkhanié. In their anxiety to leave nothing there, they had overloaded their bullock waggons. The poor half-starved cattle could scarcely drag their heavy burden up the steep and muddy roads. Constantly the bullocks of those in front would fall worn out, and a stoppage of the whole line would be the result, until the owner of the offending waggon could go back and borrow a yoke from some more fortunate companion, to help him up to the top. These poor people showed the greatest consideration for one another, each one striving to help his less fortunate neighbour.

We arrived in Orkhanié just before sunset, and found that the army of Shefket Pasha had left the day before to open the road to Plevna. We had some difficulty in getting rations, as the officials of the commissariat department were

entertaining one another at dinner and did not wish to be disturbed.

One important member of our ambulance, I forgot to mention—the sergeant or "Chaoush Mehmet," who was an Asiatic Turk, and came from the neighbourhood of Erzeroum. He was a most extraordinary character. He never would look tidy. If you got him a new suit of uniform, he insisted on wearing the new jacket with an old pair of breeches, or *vice versâ*, and wrapping his head up in a frouzy-looking woollen comforter. He was very strong, and would work at times; but, as a rule. he was incorrigibly lazy—generally more ornamental than useful—which, doubtless, induced Dr. Weller to christen him the "glass bowl." He was accustomed to swagger along in great state at the head of the train. But he was a jewel of honesty, and I could trust him with untold gold. On the occasion of our arrival in Orkhanié, he marched off to where these officials were at dinner, and delivered a speech, and asked them "what they meant by not doing their duty better, and if they thought it was right that those who did work should wait till drones like them had feasted, before their wants were attended to." His oration had a good effect, as it procured us our rations instanter.

You may be sure we did not waste much time in Orkhanié, as we fully expected the Russians would dispute the road with Shefket Pasha, and so we pushed on early next morning to Yablovitza. Next day we came up with the army at a large village called Lukovitza. As we approached, we saw that the troops were being placed in position, and we fully expected that the "ball" was going to commence; so we were considerably disquieted when we arrived on the field and found the general sitting quietly on his camp stool looking for the enemy, who were nowhere to be seen. We heard our friends of Stafford House Committee—Dr. Bond Moore, &c.—were only half an

hour in front of us in the village, so we lost no time in joining them. The Turkish advanced guard had passed on through the village, and we went after them to see "the town." The Russians had not left Lukovitza so very long before we arrived there, as the bridge which they had set on fire was still burning. When we came up with the advanced guard, who were Circassians, they were crouching behind a hill, looking at a wood about 600 yards off, where they thought the Russians were; but they did not seem inclined to verify their suspicions by drawing fire, &c., but kept discreetly behind the hill.

It came on to rain towards evening, and as there was no chance of a fight, we returned to Lukovitza. As we approached the village we heard a regular fusillade going on, and rifle balls hissing in every direction. Here was a nice dilemma. The Russians had evidently attacked us in another direction, and we were caught in a trap. When we got a little further our fears were dispersed. We found it was only the Circassians amusing themselves by a little ball practice at the geese and ducks on the river. It was dangerous going about the village; and, in fact, they succeeded in killing two soldiers and wounding two others. This getting much too serious, we reported the matter to the general, saying that we were quite willing to attend the wounded, but it was not fair that our lives and those of the soldiers should be imperilled by the disgraceful conduct of the Circassians; and, much to their disgust, these latter had to discontinue their sport.

We repeated our Eski Zaghra exploits, and slaughtered a number of fowls, which we roasted on a long stick. Our baggage did not turn up, so we had a rather uncomfortable night. The next day it was still raining—mud everywhere—in fact, not at all a pleasant morning to march; but as the army was already moving off, we should go too. After struggling through the mud for two hours we reached a rather deep

river, and, alas! the only bridge over it was broken, and no prospect of it being mended before night; so back we went to pass another night in Lukovitza. The next night we passed at Tellisch. It was a very bare place—indeed the barest we had come to yet. There was absolutely nothing to be got to eat. We halted in a deserted khan, the stables of which were situated near the road, and the walls had in many places been broken down—I suspect out of mere mischief, but very luckily for us, as it turned out. We were despairing for our dinner, when a band of Circassians entered the village with a large flock of sheep that they had seized from the enemy. They halted just abreast this stable, where all our men and horses were. Here was an opportunity! We stationed some of the strongest and oldest of our numbers near the two openings, and the rest of us stood back, looking anxiously out and praying for darkness, or even twilight. At last it came, and we succeeded in enticing five sheep near the holes where our men were stationed, and they were dragged through unperceived by the Circassians, and soon were converted into roast mutton. We ate heartily that night, and had something cold left for the morrow's journey.

As we approached Plevna we encountered several foraging parties. They seemed to have been collecting fodder for their beasts, and they must have been in considerable straits for food for the cattle and horses, for most of what they were laden with was nothing but maize stalks.

The town is situated in a hollow, surrounded by low hills, arranged in the form of a horse-shoe. Everything was wonderfully quiet inside the place, and if it had not been for the booming of the cannon and sharp crack of the rifle, one would never have supposed that such bloody scenes were being enacted near at hand. Most of the shops in the market-place were closed—a few Jews, dealers in old clothes, &c., being the only

merchants courageous enough to keep them open. I suppose their stock was not a valuable one, and they did not fear much a descent of the Russians, if such a contingency did arise. I visited some of the positions. The most interesting was the redoubt facing the Gravitza, this latter being at that time in the possession of the Roumanians, who had dug zig-zag trenches so close to the Turkish position that you could throw stones from it into the pits where the Russian allies were working.

The hospitals in Plevna were in a very dreadful condition. There was a great lack of medical attendance, and the stores were almost exhausted—so much so that many of the bandages the surgeons were using were of coloured calico, and must have been most irritating to the wounds.

I called on Osman Pasha, and presented my letters and firman to him. He was quite courteous, but not cordial in his manner. He offered me whatever rations he had, which, by the way, were not very luxurious, consisting of biscuit and rice. A good deal of odium has attached to Osman Pasha because he ordered the evacuation of the wounded sick—even more, he was accused of "expelling the English doctors from Plevna." Anybody who considers the matter calmly and rationally can only arrive at one conclusion—*i. e.*, that he did the best thing, not only for the sick and wounded, but also for the general health and prosperity of the other troops under his command in a beleaguered city. Without proper nourishment, medical attendants or appliances, these poor fellows would have suffered much more than they did by the journey to Sofia, rough and uncomfortable as it was. With regard to the second charge, he simply declared his intention of evacuating the wounded, and told the English doctors that they could best help them by establishing hospitals at Orkhanié or Sofia.

The officers told me that Osman Pasha had shown almost supernatural energy in the construction of the fortifications of Plevna. All the works were planned by himself, and a great many of them were carried out under his own personal superintendence. In a few weeks he had, with this resistless energy, converted an almost defenceless town into an impregnable fortress. It seems he always suspected the Russians of treachery, and when invited to go out to parley, never did so, always sending his aide-de-camp. There was one of the Turkish forts that the enemy had attacked many times, but failed to take, and between it and the, so to speak, opposing Russian redoubt many of the latter's dead were lying. They sent a flag of truce to demand permission to bury these bodies. Of course Osman Pasha did not wish them to approach his fortification near enough to see into it, lest they should learn the disposition of his guns, &c., so he offered to draw a line midway between the forts, and to bury the Russian dead on his side of the line; but this offer they refused, showing clearly what their designs were.

All the civil Turkish population remaining in Plevna took the opportunity of the road being "opened" to leave, which greatly increased our difficulties, as the road was almost blocked by them. Two hours after leaving the town we observed a great stir among these refugees, who began urging their beasts along at the top of their speed. We discovered that the Cossacks were about trying to cut off their retreat. The system pursued for keeping the road open was that of splitting up Shefket Pasha's army into comparatively small divisions, and posting them at intervals of several miles along the road. The result was obvious; the Russians came down on the positions in force, and took them one after the other. It was at one of these entrenched camps we arrived, shortly after the alarm was given. The Cossacks were quite close—

about 600 yards off—had dismounted in a maize field, and were distributed in skirmishing order. It was very pretty to see them advancing to the edge of the field, firing and retreating again. Some of our cavalry were despatched against them, and after a "dropping" fire that lasted about half an hour they retreated; but, as the general did not consider the road safe, he refused to allow us to leave before daylight.

We pushed on very fast the next day, as we were not by any means anxious to fall into the hands of the Russians, and arrived long after dark at the village of Yablovitza. We found all the khans full of soldiers—for the most part Christians from the neighbourhood of Salonica; and a nice set of ruffians they were. The greater number of them were drunk; they refused to share their lodgings with us, although they had plenty of room; and if it had not been for the good nature of the "khanjee" (innkeeper), we would have been obliged to remain out in the wet all night. He very kindly placed one of the rooms in his own house at our disposal; but even here we were not free from the attentions of our drunken neighbours. They came and knocked violently at the door of our apartment, demanding drink, which, of course, we refused to give them, but treated them to some reflections on their character in vernacular Turkish. They became so enraged that they tried to break down the door, and swore to kill us—which threat, I am glad to say, they did not even attempt to carry out. This was the first and only time I ever received incivility from anyone wearing the uniform of a Turkish private.

At Orkhanié we found another Red Crescent ambulance had arrived and established a hospital—to whom we handed over our wounded. We had now quite an English colony at Orkhanié—in all about fifteen doctors. That evening after supper we were amusing ourselves before going to bed by

singing. I am afraid the Pasha had no "music in his soul" (or, perhaps, too much), for he sent over to know if the English doctors had come for the purpose of humanity or to sing. The answer was short but uncomplimentary, and is, I fear, not fit for publication.

As our horses were rather worn out, and as thirty of them were shoeless, we rested two days in Orkhanié. I applied to Shefket Pasha for an order to the commissariat to purchase shoes and nails to get the horses shod. He gave directions to one of his guards to accompany me, and we went to the office of the "Intendance." The second officer who was there in charge informed us that there was plenty of whatever we wanted, and as soon as his chief came in, we could have them. When that august personage arrived, he denied the existence of any horse furniture whatever, and refused to listen to our protestations. We went back to the Pasha, but he would do nothing for us.

Next day we started for Sofia without any wounded; as our animals were in such straits we could not have taken any wounded; even if we had been able to do so, there were none to take. When we reached the top of the Pass we halted to let the horses rest, and took advantage of the interval to eat some lunch. While we were so engaged, an orderly galloped up with an order from the Pasha to return at once and take six wounded officers to Sofia. As we knew they had about a dozen Government waggons idle in Orkhanié at the time, we refused to do so, but sent a polite note to the Pasha, saying that as soon as we had had the horses shod in Sofia we would return. It was lucky we went on, for just outside Tash Kessin we found some bullock arabas had broken down, and the poor wounded fellows were sitting on the roadside without means of getting on, so we took them up and brought them to the hospital in Sofia.

For the next six weeks we continued transporting wounded from Orkhanié to Sofia, and from Sofia to Tartar Bazardjick. At last, all my companions, with one exception, were obliged to go to Constantinople on account of ill health, and two of us were not by any means able to carry on the work of the ambulance; so we determined to resign, and proceeded to Philippopolis to hand over the property to the agent of the Red Crescent appointed to receive it. The town had undergone a great change since I had been there. Ibraihim Pasha had been removed and replaced by Rifāāt Pasha, an excellent governor. Under his rule the hangings had ceased, and public confidence had been restored. I was standing in the market-place one morning when a procession of Zaptiehs passed by, carrying away the various gallows on which so many people had been hanged. The Bulgarians were looking on not a little pleased; and no wonder, for there were very few among them who had not seen some friend or relative fulfilling the penalty of death on those very gallows that were being borne by. I went to Adrianople when I had closed the affairs of the ambulance in Philippopolis. While there the following rather amusing anecdote was related to me:—

It appears that when the Russians were expected at Eski Zaghra, a rich Jew of that town, fearing their arrival, sewed all his valuables up in the lining of his overcoat, and laid it aside ready to take with him, should he be obliged to fly. When the Russians did come, he sought safety in flight, but took the wrong overcoat, and did not discover his mistake till he had arrived nearly at Adrianople, when it was too late to go back to try and rectify his fault. He continued on his way very disconsolate. He arrived duly in Adrianople, and wandered about the streets very low-spirited indeed. At last, after two days, he saw a

Circassian riding down the principal thoroughfare with his coat on. He followed him home to the khan, where he stopped and treated him, gave him coffee, asked him to dinner, and admired his overcoat. He would like to buy it; but no, the Chirkess did not want to trade. The coat was his loot, and was useful to him, and he would not sell it at any price. The Jew was driven to the verge of despair, and summoned the Circassian before the judge, and demanded his coat. But the defendant argued—"Why make me give up my property because this Jew claims it. He might say all my clothes were his. Surely you would not turn me out on the street naked, without some confirmation of this man's accusation?" The judge saw the justice of the reasoning, and dismissed the charge. The Jew feared lest the authorities should seize the valuables if he disclosed what was concealed in the lining of the garment. The Circassian went his way, and the Jew became quite melancholy, and wandered about more disconsolate than ever. After three weeks had elapsed, he encountered the Circassian, still with his coat on. He approached him and offered him the same civilities as before, and wished to buy his coat.

"Well," said the Circassian, "you seem very anxious to have it, and I don't mind selling it, but you must pay me well."

Eventually the Jew bought the garment for five times its original value, and the happy purchaser hastened home to unearth the hidden wealth; but, alas! not a piastre was left. The wily Circassian's suspicions had been aroused, and he had searched and found, and the Hebrew was clearly sold.

Our ambulance had now been over four months on the road, and not one day had been spent in idleness. My *confrères*, Dr. Weller, Mr. Banfather, and Mr. Smith, had all fallen sick through hardship and bad food. Dr. Smith and myself were alone still enjoying our usual health. During this period

of four months we had transported two thousand and sixty-seven wounded; given rations to the number of eight thousand seven hundred and fifty-two; dressed five thousand six hundred and eighty-one wounds; and lost out of these only three patients.

CHAPTER IX.

Bad News from Erzeroum—On Board—Passenger—Sinope—Kerrasond—Trebizonde—Our Special—No Post Horses—Hausekeni—A Difficult Corner—Pleasant Bed-fellows—Gromush Khane—Baibourt—Where shall we Sleep?—Kop Dagh—Valorous Servants—Cossack Outpost—Illidja—Officers' Visit—Irish Whisky—Erzeroum.

On the 17th of January, 1878, we received very bad news of our friends in Erzeroum. A letter reached us from Dr. Dennis-ton, giving us the sad intelligence that he alone was able to work—all his companions being down with typhus—and that one of them was already dead. Dr. Stiven and myself felt it was only our duty to try and go to their relief; and with the consent of our assistant-commissioner, Mr. Stoney, determined to start by the next boat. As we were cautioned about the severity of the weather in the interior of Asia Minor during the month of January, we took care to provide ourselves with plenty of warm clothing, furs, &c. We had our passports "visé-ed" for Erzeroum, by the Prussian Embassy, and on the 19th (two days after the reception of the news) we started by the Austrian Lloyd's packet "Ceres" for Trebizonde. We had determined not to lose any time, and, on arriving there, we telegraphed on to our consul, Mr. Billilotti, to engage post horses for us. We encountered most dreadful weather on our voyage, being detained two days at Beikos, at the mouth of the Bosphorus, by a snow storm, and we did not arrive in Trebizonde till the 27th, being thus nine days *en route*.

We were obliged to wait one day at Sinope, on account of stress of weather. It is a very pleasant place, and is, I believe—unlike most of the towns on the coast of the Black Sea—a very

healthy one. The promontory on which the town is built is very lofty, and as there is no marshy ground near, there is consequently no fever. The old part of the town is surrounded by a very high wall—probably of Genoese origin—which, differing from most walls in Turkey, is in a good state of preservation.

Among the passengers on board were a Pasha and a Turkish colonel. I regret to say they both drank hard. The colonel had been wounded in one of the battles at "Chourouk Su," near Batoum, and being now completely cured was returning to his regiment. He was a most extraordinary character; if questioned about his wound, no matter whether he was at table or not, he would insist on getting up and baring his manly back, and showing how he had suffered for his country. The Pasha was an enlightened old gentleman; he spoke French fluently, was conscious of all the faults of Turkish administration, and of the mistakes that had been committed during the war, and believed thoroughly in the treachery and incapacity of Abdul Kerim Pasha, and others of his class.

We stopped for a few hours at Samsoun—a place famous for the superior quality of its tobacco, a great deal of which it exports to Russia—and at Kerrasond. The chief export from this latter place is filbert nuts. The mountains for miles and miles around the town are covered with forests of nut trees.

We arrived at Trebizonde on the morning of the 27th, and found horses, &c., ready. A special postman had been provided to accompany us, and whose duty it was to find us fresh relays. In the hotel we met Captains Trotter and Cray, who had just arrived from Baibourt; they reported the road as being in a very bad condition, and held out little hope of our being able to reach Erzeroum. We heard also, to our great

sorrow, of the death of Dr. Pinkerton, who had fallen a victim to typhus, which was at that time raging in Erzeroum.

It was about two o'clock when we left Trebizonde, and half an hour after sunset arrived in Jevizlik. As the moon did not rise till after one o'clock, we were compelled to wait, the road being too slippery and rough to attempt to proceed in the dark. We turned in to rest, and got up about two o'clock, when we found the moon "all serene;" but, alas! there were no horses. A post had passed through while we were asleep, and all the fresh ones had been taken. Those which had brought us thus far on our journey were too tired to go on so soon. All that remained to do was to let them rest till morning.

We started soon after daylight in company with Captain M'Calmont—one of our military attachés, going to Baibourt to join Sir A. Kemball—and reached the village of Hausekeni shortly after midday. The road up to this point was fairly good, and the scenery magnificent. The valley through which we journeyed surpasses description. Far below us roared the torrent, while above our heads towered lofty mountains clothed with pine woods, and here and there along the sides of the valley were perched villages and monasteries in what seemed to us to be most perilous places.

We stopped two hours in Hausekeni to rest our horses. Our special postman was a failure. He turned out to be a lazy coward. He wanted, right or wrong, to stay that night where we were; but we were determined to push on and not waste another night in bed. We told him, therefore, he could stay if he pleased.

It was only now we began to experience the difficulties and dangers of our journey. Up to the present all had been plain sailing. The road was dug out of the side of the mountain, and, of course, on the outer edge of it the snow was shallowest,

here a narrow path about two feet wide had been worn by the traffic, and along it we were obliged to keep. It was very rough and slippery. A false step would have been enough, and we would have been precipitated over the cliff into the valley a thousand feet below. This pleasant state of affairs lasted for nearly three hours, during which time we said hardly a word. We sat in our saddles with our feet free of the stirrups, prepared to throw ourselves off on the inside in case our horses should stumble. Approaching the summit of the Pass, the cliffs diminished considerably in height, and a stumble was only followed by a roll down a snow slope, a distance of one hundred feet; but as this danger diminished the actual difficulties of the road increased. It was literally travelling over ice, and that at an angle of about 18°. About an hour from the top we began to fear we would lose our baggage. Seven times the pack-horses fell, and as many times were they righted and repacked, and still we struggled on. At last, turning a corner, we came on a sight that almost filled us with despair. A large caravan of about sixty horses was trying to pass a difficult place. As each advanced he toppled over and fell, and rolled over and over to the bottom of the slope, or, less fortunate, stuck half way. We saw about twenty horses go down like this. As was to be expected, all the baggage horses belonging to our party met the same fate. The "righting" them this time was much more difficult than it was before. First we had to free them of the pack saddle, baggage, &c., which had to be carried to some distance further on our backs, and then we dragged them down to the bottom of the slope, and stamped with our feet a zig-zag path for them up to the summit. This delayed us two hours, and it was long after dark, and snowing heavily, when we reached the khan on the summit of the Zagana mountain, where we were obliged to spend the night.

When we entered, we found that the caravan already mentioned had arrived before us, and all the available space seemed occupied. We asked for another room. Yes, there was another. But from the manner of the khanjee we suspected all was not right, and we asked to see it. It was not a cheerful prospect that presented itself to our view when we entered. Two corners of the room were piled high with snow which had found its way in through a hole in the roof; the stove in the middle was full of the same; but, more than this, alongside the stove were stretched the corpses of two soldiers who had been frozen to death! Very placid and calm they looked, wrapped in their rough overcoats. Their well-worn boots, ragged uniforms, and emaciated limbs, told a tale of many a hard-fought field—many a long and weary march—and preached a silent, though expressive, sermon on the hardships and miseries of war.

Well, it was not very luxurious, but it was better than nothing; so we determined to make ourselves as comfortable as circumstances would permit—and, first, we asked them to remove the corpses. No, that they would not do; they were Padisha askerlers (Government soldiers), who had done their duty, and died in the execution of it, and must be left undisturbed. One could not but admire the sentiments which urged the companions of the dead men to reason thus, and it showed how strong the feeling of friendship and comradeship is that exists between the Turkish soldiers. But we felt that "a living dog was better than a dead lion," and demanded that they should be placed elsewhere; and it was only after much persuasion and producing our firmans that we accomplished our end. We lit the stove, made some tea, and felt infinitely refreshed. Each selected the softest place he could find; and, wrapped in our overcoats, we "turned in." Our companion was not as lucky in the selection of his position as

we were. The heat of the stove had melted the snow on the roof, and it dropped through on our friend, and in the morning part of his anatomy was confined in a firm coating of ice.

In the morning a messenger reached us with a telegram which had been sent after him from Trebizonde. On opening it he found it contained orders for him to return; so we bade him *bon voyage*, and continued our journey alone.

A lot of snow had fallen during the night, which greatly increased the difficulty of our route. About half way down the mountain our guide, who was perfectly ignorant of the road, succeeded in landing us in a snow-drift, out of which there seemed no way. If ever you hire a guide in Turkey, always ascertain if he has ever been over the road you want to go. It was late that night when we reached Gumush Khane. Up to the present, although we had passed three post stations, we had never succeeded in getting a change of post-horses, and riding tired us more than I can say.

Gromush Khane, or Silver House, is so called on account of the extensive silver mines that exist in the neighbourhood. The town is situated at some distance from the high road. A village, however, exists where the road branches off, so the traveller can seek shelter without making a *detour* of half an hour, which is necessary to reach the town. The valley east of the same is celebrated for its pears all over Turkey. The journey the next day occupied sixteen hours. We left two hours before daylight, and did not reach Baibourt till after midnight. The last five hours were accomplished through a blinding snow-storm, and we felt sure that we had lost the road, as the track was entirely obliterated by the falling snow, which prevented our distinguishing objects at a distance of two yards off. We were so cold and tired during this last part of the journey that we got down and tried to

walk, but it was no use; we slipped about so in the freshly falling snow that it was more wearisome than riding. We were obliged to re-mount. At last, after five hours of this pleasant mode of journeying, and when we were almost on the verge of despair, out of the darkness came the hoarse challenge of the sentry, "Kim doro?" (Who goes there?) and we knew that we had arrived in Baibourt. It was useless to try and get into any private house on account of the lateness of the hour. We rode straight to the Government House, or Konak, and demanded quarters. The officer on duty gave us a Zaptieh to accompany us to find what we wanted; but, after wandering about the streets for nearly an hour, we were obliged to return utterly worn out. I think they took pity on us, seeing we were so tired, and placed the council chamber at our disposal, but with the provision that we must turn out at 6 o'clock in the morning. It was not a cheerful prospect, but as we had no other alternative we accepted. In the morning we found lodgings in the house of an Armenian priest; he was very civil, but he robbed us horribly in the bill. We heard that the Russian outposts were at a village called Ashkala, four hours from the other side of the Kop Dagh. Baibourt presented quite a different aspect from any Oriental town I had been in, and for some time I wondered what the difference was. At last it struck me that the houses were all flat-topped, and roofed with clay. The reason is, I believe, that it makes them much cooler in summer, and much warmer in winter, and that during the very hot weather it is the custom of the inhabitants to sleep on the roofs. There was no regular postal service further than Baibourt; and if it had not been for the kind assistance of Sir Arnold Kemball we would have had great difficulty in getting horses to take us on. The postmaster consented to let us have seven, on condition of our leaving forty-two liras in case they should be

seized by the Russians. If, however, they were brought back, he was to refund the money. There were a good many troops in Baibourt, and we were very much interested to see some of the soldiers fishing. The river was frozen, the ice being about eight inches thick. They selected a long level reach, with a deep pool at the lower end. In the ice covering this they cut a slit about twelve feet long and two feet wide, through which a large bag-shaped net was lowered into the river, the mouth being kept open by means of two poles fixed at either side. Several men now proceeded up to the end of the level, and, stamping and hammering the ice with poles, frightened the fish down into the net. The fish caught were a kind of grayling. I saw them take considerably over a hundred in a haul.

Starting rather late the next day, we reached the village of Kop Khan. As we expected to encounter many difficulties crossing the mountain, we took an additional pack-horse in order to divide the luggage. The road over the Kop Dagh is usually kept open during the winter by the constant passage of Persian caravans; but this year, on account of the war, they were unable to proceed; so the pass, comparatively speaking, had been closed for nearly two months. It was the story of the Zagana Mountain over again, so I will not tire my readers with a description of it. It has been my good fortune to stand on the summit of one of the highest of the Swiss Alps; but the panorama I saw on that occasion was far surpassed by the one that presented itself to my view as I stood on the top of the Kop Dagh. The whole plain of Erzeroum that lay stretched at our feet was covered with white fleecy clouds, and appeared to us to be a frozen lake. Around it, and as far as the eye could reach on every side, stretched long chains of snowy mountains, glistening and sparkling in the morning sun. It was a scene of surpassing grandeur, and one that I shall never forget.

We descended, and passed the night in the village of Pirnajaban. The contractor who had accompanied us thus far, and our "valorous special postman," were in a state of mortal terror about the Russians. The former determined to await our return where he was, and the other, alas! not by any means according to his usual habit, went to bed supperless, his appetite being overcome by his anxiety.

The rumour was confirmed that we had heard at Baibourt about the presence of the Russians at Ashkala, a distance of three hours.

We determined to "meet the foe in the morning;" and with a Red Cross flag and an English Union Jack hoisted (according to the rules of the Geneva Convention), we set out before daylight. Our "special" slunk about a mile and a half behind, and nothing could induce him to keep up. As we got close to Ashkala we saw a body of about one hundred Cossacks leaving the town, and we halted, shouted, and waved our flags vigorously. They immediately wheeled and galloped towards us. We were not sure what they would do, and we felt a very disagreeable sensation in the neighbourhood of the spinal marrow—what a gentleman of Milesian origin described as "a quare feelin' down the small o' me back." However, we had nothing to fear; they were perfectly civil, and gave us an escort of two men to conduct us to the head-quarters of General Sistovitch, at Illidja. At Kara Buyuk Khan we came on the first outpost of Russian infantry. They seemed very young—in fact, almost boys. Their equipment was capital, and formed a very strong contrast to that we were accustomed to see with the Turkish soldiers. Strong knee-boots, a uniform of dark blue cloth, a long sheepskin coat reaching below the knee, a rough grey overcoat and bashlik, and a cloth hood with long tails to wrap round the neck, completed their dress. They were

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very friendly, and invited us to warm ourselves by their fires while the horses were resting.

When we entered Illidja we were surrounded by a crowd of rough-looking Cossacks and soldiers. One of the former made a dive at the English flag, and attempted to snatch it out of the hand of our servant who was carrying it. This was more than our loyal blood could stand. Dr. Stiven put the spurs into his horse and "went for" the Cossack, who very soon relinquished his hold. His conduct, I should mention, was not approved of by his comrades, who expressed their dissatisfaction loudly.

We were most courteously received by General Sistovitch, who said it was impossible for him to give us the necessary permission to pass the lines, but promised to telegraph to Tiflis for orders. He said that we could not receive an answer before to-morrow, and he gave us quarters in an Armenian house, where we could put up till the desired permission should arrive.

We waited all next day most anxiously for an answer, but none arrived. In the evening some officers came in to pay us a visit. They were very good fellows, but had a frightfully exalted idea about Russian things in general. There was nothing like Russian tea; Russian leather was the best known; Russian horses the most wonderful that were ever foaled, &c. The only thing we had to entertain them with was some of a "spirit called whisky," and this we tendered with many apologies, saying we had none of their native vodka to offer them. They passed the bottle round, smelling and criticising the liquor with the air of connoisseurs:—

"Hem, not bad," said one.

"Yes, but not so good as vodka," exclaimed number two.

"A bottle of it would just send me to sleep," muttered number three.

They nearly finished the liquor. The result was encouraging. They were all so drunk that they had to be removed in the arms of their faithful servitors.

Next morning we received the welcome leave to enter Erzeroum as we were sitting down to breakfast, and did not waste much time availing ourselves of the permission. We were escorted outside the Russian lines by a Cossack, and in about an hour and a half reached the Turkish outpost at the village of Gess. Our "special" now came to the front, and offered to carry our flag and march bravely in the van, but as he had occupied the somewhat responsible position of rear-guard during the greater part of the journey, we considered (much to his dissatisfaction) that he should still stick to his original post.

We were obliged to wait a little time in Gess till our arrival was telegraphed to head-quarters, and after a delay of about half an hour,—with our hearts beating in anxious expectation as to the fate of our comrades—we entered Erzeroum, after a somewhat harassing but interesting journey of six days and a half.

CHAPTER X.

All Convalescent — Typhus — Dead-carts — Jealousy — Notice to Quit — A Russian Visit—Fort Aziz—Grateful Patient—Three Lonely Graves—Decreased Sobriety—Russian Hospitals—A Welcome Order—Good-by to Erzeroum—Constantinople again.

As soon as we entered the gates of Erzeroum, speculation was rife as to who we were, and what our mission was. Muffled in our gray coats, with large fur caps on, people at first concluded we were Russians; but when we removed the former, and the badge of the Stafford House Committee was seen on our arms, we were received as the representatives of a Society which had rendered such invaluable services to the Turkish soldiers not only in Erzeroum, but in other places, and were at once surrounded by a crowd of about three hundred people, who conducted us to the great barracks where were the quarters of Ismail Pasha. We saw the chief of the staff, who welcomed us heartily, and asked eagerly for news from the outer world. The general, he said, was asleep and could not receive us, and we retired to seek our friends. Up to the present we had asked no questions about them, fearing to hear that they were dead; but when we reached the house where we were told the "Ingliz" doctors lived, what was our joy to find them all convalescent, and to receive a hearty welcome from those we had hardly dared hope to see alive! Dr. Denniston was the only one who had not been attacked with typhus. And here let me bear my humble tribute of well-merited praise to one who, in the midst of the most terrible circumstances, did his duty nobly and well, and

earned for himself and for his country a reputation he may well be proud of. Our friends were most comfortably located in the house that had been the English Consulate, and it was a great pleasure to feel ourselves at home after the many discomforts of our journey. Erzeroum presents the usual characteristics of all the towns I have seen in the interior of Asia Minor—flat-roofed houses, tall minarets, narrow, ill-paved streets, voracious dogs, and beggars fearfully and wonderfully deformed.

The winter was an exceptionally severe one, and the streets were piled up with snow. The sanitary condition was dreadfully bad; there did not seem to be any drains whatever connected with houses, the refuse being carried into the street and buried in the snow-drift. Typhus had been raging with great fierceness, and still existed extensively, though it was on the decline. One day early in January the death-rate was as high as four hundred. Every morning the dead-carts, or rather sleighs, went round to the different hospitals to collect the bodies of those who had died during the night. About midday they might be seen filing off to the graveyards—a melancholy procession; the bodies thrown into them pell-mell like so many logs of wood. It reminded me of Ainsworth's description of somewhat similar circumstances in the "Plague of London." We had two hospitals—one the Stafford House Hospital, and the other the English Hospital. The former was in the Yeni Khan, contained three hundred and seventy beds, and was conducted by Dr. Ryan, assisted by a staff of Turkish surgeons and dressers—who were, however, paid out of Stafford House funds. The second, containing one hundred and seventy beds, was in the Pasternaji Khan, and had been established by the surgeons sent out by Lord Blantyre, and was, at the time of my arrival, administered by Dr. Denniston,

who had, during the illness of Dr. Ryan, conducted both the hospitals.

Most of our cases were surgical ones—principally frost-bite. It was estimated that during the siege four thousand men suffered from this dreadful affliction. Ill-clothed, without proper boots, these poor fellows were obliged to keep guard on the ramparts night after night, with the thermometer far below freezing point; and perhaps, overcome with fatigue, fell asleep or failed to keep moving, and in the morning were carried into hospital, sometimes with both legs frost-bitten half way up to the knees. A few days after gangrene would set in, and without proper nourishment (we had none to give them) they sank and died. At one time we had twenty-two patients in the Yeni Khan who had either lost both hands or both feet.

I may say, without, I hope, being accused of vanity, that our hospitals were better administered than those of the Government. This circumstance was, I regret to say, a cause of great jealousy to the Turkish medical authorities. As the typhus gradually decreased they began to evacuate one hospital after another, and to send cases down to us that were quite unfit to be moved. Some of these unfortunates died on the way, and some immediately after entering. This was done with the intention, I believe, of augmenting our death-rate. At last a circumstance occurred that brought matters to a climax. One morning, about 8 o'clock, as we were sitting at breakfast, a servant of the English Hospital came in and told Dr. Denniston they were evacuating his hospital. The doctor rushed off at once, and found it was true enough. Although it was early morning, and very cold, the poor fellows had been forced to leave their beds, and, without any additional clothing, to march through the wet and sloppy streets to other hospitals. This charitable act had been

accomplished by the chief surgeon to the hospitals in Erzeroum. In one case he thought that the patient was not walking quickly enough, and, to urge him to go faster, he seized him by his wounded arm, and pulled so vigorously as to cause the wound to re-open; smart hæmorrhage was the result. Dr. Denniston went at once to the governor of the town, Hakke Bey, and complained of the conduct of the chief surgeon. This official simply went mad with rage, tore his hair, and beat his breast in true Oriental fashion; but, better still, he put the offending surgeon in prison for twenty-four days.

Several attempts had been made to send troops out of the city, but in nearly all cases they were obliged to return; the snow was too deep to pass anywhere, except by the high roads, and these were closely guarded by the enemy. The last detachment that left consisted of eight hundred men, with the wives and little ones of the officers. They were overtaken by a snow-storm in the mountains shortly after leaving Erzeroum, and only three hundred of them returned to tell the tale; the other five hundred, with the women and children, were frozen to death!

About the end of February we heard the armistice had been concluded, and that the town was about to be occupied by the Russians. The Mussulman inhabitants, on hearing this, were very indignant, and went in a body to Ismail Pasha to remonstrate, protesting that after they had lost so many of their fellow-townsmen in the defence of the city, it was not right or just to deliver them over to the enemy. The old general was moved to tears on hearing them, and replied,

"My children, it is not me you must blame; I have received orders from the Padisha at Constantinople, and must obey."

I had not the good fortune to be in Erzeroum during the last attack, but it has been related to me how, during the

night, three hundred Russians succeeded in getting into one of the outlying forts—I believe it was the Aziz Tabia—by means of a rope ladder. The news was telegraphed into the city, and immediately the priests rushed to the minarets of the mosques, and called on the faithful to defend themselves against the "Giaour." At once the men and boys seized their arms, and the women ran shrieking through the streets, calling on their sons and fathers and brothers to defend them. The great bulk of the people, led by Capitan Mehmet Pasha, hurried off to the Aziz Tabia, and a dreadful hand-to-hand conflict ensued, out of which only two or three Russians came alive. All the rest were slain within the walls of the fort. I was told that the scene inside the fort on the morrow baffled description. The dead were lying piled on one another—bayonets were lying about broken and twisted—rifles with the stocks smashed off, besmeared with blood and brains, told how fierce the combat had been.

The Turkish troops were despatched to Erzinghan, each one carrying two rifles, for which extra load he was to receive 10 piastres (silver money) on arriving at the place above mentioned.

The Russians did not make much show about entering the town. Late one evening the forts were occupied, and next day Loris Melikoff entered, escorted by two or three regiments of cavalry. The day of his entry we were sitting round the stove smoking an after-dinner cigarette, when our American servant rushed in and announced the Moscovs. He was shortly followed by two Russian officers—very dirty, strong-smelling gentlemen they were. When they saw us they seemed somewhat embarrassed, and exclaimed—"Hotel Buffet," which seemed to be the limit of their knowledge of any European or Oriental tongue except Russian. We tried them in English, German, French, Italian, Armenian, and

Greek, but it was no use. Then we sent out for an interpreter, and, in the meantime, entertained our friends to tea and rum, which they seemed highly to appreciate. It appeared, as we discovered when the dragoman arrived, that somebody had told them our house was a hotel.

The presence of the Russians in Erzeroum began to be very soon felt. The prices of every form of intoxicating liquor, which were before sufficiently exaggerated, now became enormous. Cafés and liquor shops were opened with most amazing rapidity, and drunkenness amongst the Christian inhabitants became very prevalent. I heard of one lucky Armenian who was the happy possessor of two barrels of rum, whose daughters, that before were considered ugly, suddenly sprang into notice as beauties, and were married immediately.

The difficulties of transport from Kars and Alexandropol were enormous; so much so, that the Russians, when they were encamped on Devir Boyoun, were at one time two days without bread. In spite of this, two or three days after their occupation, several Russian ladies of the *demi-monde* arrived in Erzeroum. In fact the town became demoralised; and the American missionary commented to me, on several occasions, on the increasing immoralities of the people.

I think I said our house was a good one—probably the best in Erzeroum—and very nicely furnished, *à la Franka*. The Russian general very soon learned this, and wished to get it, but we positively refused to go. He appealed to the civil council, who were charged with finding quarters for the Russians, and they intimated to us that we had better leave. We went next day to a meeting of this council, and asked them was this the gratitude we were to expect after all our labours, and after the death of our two comrades? Immediately one of the Pashas present rose and made a most eloquent

speech, and said they would be for ever disgraced if they asked the English doctors to leave their house for anyone. Not only that, but the wounded would suffer, and they would have many deaths to answer for. After such an insult offered to them, they could not expect English doctors would remain in Erzeroum. He carried his audience completely with him, and it was finally decided that we were not to be disturbed.

We retired comforted. A few days afterwards General Hayman called on us, and complained that the house he was in, though large, was still very cold, and begged us to leave and take his house, as he was a very old man, and could not stand the cold as well as we could. Of course, when he made a request like this, we had nothing to do but accede to it, and gave up our house, accordingly, to the general; but we took all the furniture with us.

I was not favourably impressed with the Armenians I met in Erzeroum. The landlord of our house, for example, was a most patriarchal-looking old gentleman, and one would not have supposed, to look at him, that the conventional butter would melt in his sweet old mouth. The wife of his bosom fell ill with typhus, and I had the honour of being called in to attend on her. I did so for a week—paying two or three visits daily. When I asked for my fee he was almost abusive, and said that I did not deserve the nice present he was preparing for me, which turned out to be a pair of slippers, made out of a piece of an old Persian carpet. "Never look a gift horse in the mouth." It was real Persian work, and if I had been sentimental enough I might have conjured up sweet visions of the fair hands that wove it; but I was not, and, on the other hand, felt rather disgusted.

One of our greatest friends in Erzeroum was Father Vassilo, the Superior of the section of Capuchins who lived in that

place. He had been a long time there, and some of his recollections were very interesting. The price of living, he said, had enormously increased of late. Eight years ago you could buy a calf of four months old for 12 piastres, good money (about 2s.). At the time I was there we were paying the same money for 3 lbs. of meat of a very indifferent quality. Champagne was 35s. a bottle. One of our number received the Order of the Medjidie while we were in Erzeroum, and immediately sent out for three bottles of champagne to drink his health. He forgot to look at the bill till the liquor was drunk, and then even his generous soul was dismayed. Wood was by far the largest item in the household account. During the siege ours cost £100; but then they were obliged to pull down houses to supply us with the article, so its dearness was not to be wondered at. With all this rise in prices there was no lack of provisions; and the Russians were surprised on entering to find the city so well supplied. The Russians established two or three hospitals soon after entering Erzeroum. I visited one of them, and did not find any improvement in it as compared with the Turkish ones. The treatment was better, as the doctors have a superior education, but their wards were quite as dirty as the others, and the patients infinitely dirtier. A Turk is by nature cleanly in his person at least, whereas the Russian soldiers seemed to me never to have washed since natal ablutions had first been performed.

The Russian troops were quartered all over the town, and, going about, as was our custom, to visit some of the poorer Armenians who were sick, we came upon numerous cases of Russian soldiers, especially Cossacks, down with typhus, who seemed to have been utterly neglected by their officers and doctors. I attended a Russian doctor who was very bad with this fatal disease. With one exception not one of his

comrades ever went near him. All honour to the one that did—he was a good comrade, and a pleasant companion; and I feel sure none of us will forget the many acts of kindness of our friend Serpitzky.

I do not suppose that there was ever a siege in history attended with such mortality to the besieged, by typhus, as that of Erzeroum. No very accurate official record of the deaths was kept, I believe; but the general computation of the deaths from typhus was from 16,000 to 18,000, and from frost-bite and other causes 4,000. Of the thirty-five doctors who were in Erzeroum when the city was surrounded, twenty-three died before the Russian occupation. This number does not include Turkish surgeons or dressers—a death-list of the latter being, as far as I know, never kept.

Just after the Russian occupation an ambulance of the Red Crescent Society arrived in Erzeroum. The chief, Dr. Roy, was an Englishman, but the other six were Danes, Swedes, and Norwegians. Of these latter, four got typhus, and one (Dr. Price) fell a victim to this terrible disease. He lies with two of our own comrades—Drs. Pinkerton and Guppy—whom we buried in the little graveyard on the hill-side within the fortifications. They died far away from home, without the tender presence of mother or sister to soothe their last moments. But they died a death which we must all be proud of—in the midst of the misery they had so nobly striven to relieve—in the midst of such scenes of suffering as the world seldom saw—reflecting imperishable honour on the countries they represented and the profession they adorned!

Of course, after the Turkish troops left, our work diminished every day, as no more fresh cases were coming in. When the hot weather began, the sanitary condition of the city became really terrible. The deaths had been so numerous that it was impossible to bury all the corpses properly, and as the

snow disappeared off the graveyards, the sight and the stench were appalling. A sanitary commission was at once instituted by the Russians, and, after a couple of weeks, most of the bodies had been re-buried, and the cemeteries cleaned as far as possible. The great difficulty experienced by the commission was, that there was barely sufficient lime to be found to cover all the bodies.

We left Erzeroum on the 31st of March, and after a journey of fourteen days I found myself once again in Constantinople.

CHAPTER XI.

Bulgarian Atrocities—Refugees at Adrianople—Russian Politeness—Hospitality Requited—Philippopolis—Refugee Encampment—Story of Nazly—Proselytism — Bourgas—A Melancholy Embarkation — Russians Outwitted—Varna.

THE conduct of the Bulgarians—and also, indeed, of the Russians—towards the Christian and Mussulman populations of Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia since the signing of the treaty of San Stefano, has attracted European attention to a considerable degree. Before the signing of the treaty the Mussulman population suffered largely, fleeing as they did before the advancing enemy. These sufferings the Russians are in no way accountable for; but since then these unfortunate people have been the victims of a barbarity, never, I hope and believe, equalled in the history of the world. Under the guise of friendship, after peace was signed, many of these refugees were induced to return to their homes from Constantinople, and they have been maltreated and outraged in the grossest manner, if not actually by the Russian soldiers, by the Bulgarians, who have, at all events, the moral support of their Sclavic brethren, who, being the party in possession and power, are responsible for the good conduct and well-being of the people under their rule. Shortly after returning from Erzeroum I was sent by the Turkish Compassionate Fund to inquire into the state of the refugees in the districts of Philippopolis and Adrianople. Let me give a slight sketch of what I saw. At Adrianople I found some twenty thousand refugees distributed through the Turkish quarter of the town, and in the mosques; they

appeared very wretched indeed. They told me that when they arrived in Adrianople they were fairly off, having brought their flocks and herds with them, and their arabas laden with grain, but since then all their property had been stolen by the Bulgarians, and they lived in constant dread of their lives. "Why," said they, "does not Europe hear of these things? When we retaliated on the Bulgarians after their attempt at insurrection, and when the Pomacs burnt their villages and committed other outrages, it was known everywhere; but now we suffer much more than they did, and nobody cares."

The Russians at that time distributed maize and barley to these refugees, each one receiving about three hundred drachms, or two pounds, every nine or ten days. There was a good deal of sickness amongst them—small-pox, dysentery, and typhus—and death was very busy, as was testified by the number of newly-made graves in the Turkish cemeteries.

The conduct of the Russian soldiers was very good, but that of the officers was vile. They seemed to lose no opportunity of insulting and annoying the Greek and Armenian inhabitants of the town. They were, for the most part, quartered in the houses of the richest inhabitants. One of these latter—a Greek, a notable of the place, and a member of the Government Council, or Megliss—extended his hospitality to a Russian officer, who brought a woman to live with him whom he said was his wife. Just before Easter it is the custom amongst all the oriental Christians to give their houses a thorough cleaning, and in accordance with this habit the lady of the house went to the Russian officer's wife and explained the custom to her, and wished to take off the linen covers of some chairs and divans to have them washed, promising to return them as soon as they were finished. This the Russian lady refused to allow, and got abusive; her

husband appeared during the scene, and was enraged against his host's wife. Then he sent for a certain Capt. Orloff, chief of the police, who arrested the lady, and had her conducted through the streets bare-headed, and guarded by four soldiers with drawn bayonets, and lodged in gaol for eight hours. Another gentleman—an Armenian, I believe—received a Russian officer into his house. A friend of his called on him, dismounted at the door, and left his horse in charge of the Armenian gentleman's servant. When he had finished his visit he came out, and was not pleased with the servant, whom he began to belabour. The master of the house interfered to protect his servant, and was in his turn beaten also; and though he complained, could obtain no redress. I heard of several instances where young Turkish girls were carried off and confined in houses for the Russian officers, who visited them in relays. sometimes for a period lasting over two days.

When the principal inhabitants of Adrianople complained to the governor of the town of these disgraceful proceedings, he said—"The fact is, we have lost nearly all our good officers, and these men who replace them have been dismissed the service before the war for bad conduct, or are boys fresh from the academy."

The insurrection which is still going on in the Rhodope Balkans resulted from the outrages committed by the Bulgarians on the Mussulman population in the district of Adrianople. In and about the neighbourhood of Hasekeni twenty-one Turkish villages were burnt and sacked, and the women violated. The male population sought safety in the mountains There they found two cannon and a quantity of arms and ammunition, which were left behind by Suleiman Pasha when he retreated, and with which they have since been able to keep the Russians at bay. I stayed a few days in Adrianople, and then went on to Philippopolis. I found

great changes in the place, a part of the bazaar having been burnt. The refugees were in a most dreadful condition. It was in the rainy weather, but in spite of this they had been turned out of the town, and were forced to live in tents in the middle of a rice marsh. Most of these poor people were women and children; and the result can be imagined. In every tent I found from two to five cases of typhus.

There were plenty of suitable sites for an encampment near the town, but the Russian authorities would not allow the tents to be moved. The male refugees were compelled to labour for the Russians, and promised a franc per diem. I asked them if they received this money, and they said no. This matter, I was informed, had been represented to the governor of the town, General Stalibin, who answered that the intention was to pay them in a lump sum; but that could hardly have been true, as several thousands of the refugees who had worked had been sent back to their villages without receiving a single "para." These unfortunate people received a very meagre supply of bread from the Russian authorities. As they were by this system of forced labour deprived of their natural bread-winners, the prospect before them was a very miserable one.

A native Bulgarian police had been organised by the Russians. Its ranks were recruited from the greatest ruffians in the town. One of the lieutenants had been an "arabajee" in my ambulance, and I was obliged to turn him off for stealing a saddle. Many Turkish women and young girls had been seized and carried off for the Russian officers, and these abductions were in the most instances effected by the Bulgarian police.

The story of one of these unfortunate girls is interesting. Our consul, Mr. F. Calvert, complained to General Stalibin of the abductions, saying that the Russian officers ought to

know better than to encourage the Bulgarians in such nefarious practices. Next day he received a challenge from a Russian officer to prove his charge, retract it, fight, or be horsewhipped. He showed himself right, and thus:—Two days afterwards a Turkish woman came to him and complained that her daughter Nazly, aged fourteen years, had been carried off by two Bulgarian policemen, accompanied by a Russian officer, and that she was at present confined in a Bulgarian house, which she knew. Mr. Calvert at once brought the woman to General Stalibin, and insisted on his accompanying the woman to the house where her daughter was confined. Accordingly they set out, the woman going in advance to indicate the way, followed by Mr. Calvert, who was in turn followed by the general and his staff. They reached the house, and found the girl Nazly, who had been confined there for seven days. The same evening three or four young Turkish girls were returned to their parents or friends, but threatened with death if they should disclose where they had been confined.

The Turkish Compassionate Fund has done a great deal of good all over European Turkey, and nowhere more notably than in Philippopolis. A refuge for adults and an orphanage for the reception of fatherless and motherless children, were part of its programme. At the time I write of, these excellent institutions were under the care of our vice-consul, Mr. F. J. Calvert. In the orphanage there were about seventy or eighty children, who were fed and clothed, and instructed in reading, &c., by a Turkish schoolmaster appointed for the purpose. It was very pleasant to turn from the scene of misery and death presented to one's view in the encampment, to the peaceful and quiet prospect the orphanage offered. A Russian officer—I believe the chief of the police—visited the institution, and seeing all the little ones, suggested that they

should be brought up as Christians—in fact, proposing a kind of compulsory conversion. I am glad to say this unworthy proposal was indignantly rejected. "Charity, and not proselytism," said Mr. Calvert, "is our object."

Before the war the Mussulman population of the "Sanjak" of Philippopolis was over 300,000, and now scarcely 30,000 remain in the district. A good many refugees had been sent back to their villages from Philippopolis—I believe to the number of about 11,000—but most of them were obliged to return to the town again on account of the manner in which they were maltreated by the Bulgarians. Only the day before I arrived in Philippopolis 800 of these poor people had been sent away; two hours' distance from that place they were attacked and robbed by the Bulgarians of whatever little they had left.

Returning to find their homes ruined or burned—without bread, or cattle, or means to till the ground, or seed to sow it, and surrounded by a hostile population thirsting for their blood—there was indeed a sorry prospect before them, and recent events have shown pretty clearly the amount of mercy or kind of treatment they had to expect from the Bulgarians, if not aided by, still with the moral support of, the soldiers of "Holy Russia." I had seen enough to convince me of the impossibility of the mass of refugees at Constantinople being able to return to their homes, and I returned to make my report at head-quarters. A few days after, I was despatched on a similar mission, but in a different direction, to Bourgas and Varna. The journey to the former place usually occupied about nine hours, but on this occasion it took nearly twenty-four. It was not the weather; if that had been bad, we should have gone to the bottom. The steamer was so heavily laden, and her paddles were buried so deep, that they could only revolve very slowly. There were over 100 tons of petroleum on deck, and I am afraid to say how much

below; but still, smoking went on freely, and matches were lighted in the most careless manner.

All the Turks had been obliged to leave Bourgas, with only one exception, and that was the guard or "cavass" of the English vice-consul, Mr. Brophy, by whom I was most hospitably entertained. Bourgas is a pretty little town situated on the western extremity of a gulf of the same name. It is famed for sport of every kind, and is a capital place for head-quarters if on a shooting expedition. It is easy of access, and all necessaries and many luxuries are to be found in the bazaar. In the Misseveri Balkans near at hand red deer and pigs abound; the plain south and east is good ground for partridge and woodcock, while duck and snipe are found in abundance on the marshes along the shores of the gulf.

Mr. Brophy told me that the Russians had behaved scandalously after the occupation of the town, breaking into and pillaging the shops in every direction, and at the time I was there the officers were behaving to everybody who was not Bulgarian, after the manner of their *confrères* in Adrianople. Bourgas was the depôt for the recruits and munitions, and consequently Russian transports and ships of war were constantly arriving. One evening a Bulgarian brought me down to the pier, and pointing to some of these latter, said—"Look there; what do you think of our ships?"

At the other side of the bay on which Bourgas is situated is a place with the interesting name, Chinganee Iskelesi, which, being translated, means the gipsies' landing-place. Here, I was informed, some 20,000 refugees were encamped, and I went over to see them. These people were from the districts of Karnabat, Aidos, Slivna, and Yamboli. On the approach of the Russians they had fled into the mountains, where they remained five months, all through the winter, and now they had come down to the seaside to embark for Constantinople and Asia Minor. The

Russians had at first promised them a guard of soldiers to conduct them overland to Constantinople, but when the people were prepared to descend from their mountain refuge on this understanding, the Russians refused to fulfil their promise, so the poor refugees were compelled to go by sea, and the Turkish Government sent steamers for this purpose.

I arrived at Chinganee Iskelesi early in the morning. There were about 15,000 refugees in the place, over 5,000 having already embarked. At the same time there were at least, I should say, from 7,000 to 9,000 Bulgarian villagers, all males, hanging about, waiting for a chance to steal the cattle of these poor people. A great number of cattle had been stolen from the Bulgarians in the above-mentioned districts where these refugees came from, and these people had come down to identify and recover their property. They made sure of their rights by claiming everything—in fact, they just walked round till they saw something that suited them, and then claimed it; and one can imagine what little chance the Turks had before the Russo-Bulgarian commission that decided the claims. I spoke to many of the refugees. They said that they had suffered greatly during the winter in the mountains, and that more than 3,000 of their number had died from sickness. They complained that the Russians had broken faith with them in not allowing them to go overland to Constantinople, as they had promised. If this had been done they would have saved all their cattle, which were either being stolen now, or which they were forced to sell for one-sixth of their value.

A great many of these unfortunate people had found their way to a sandy tongue of land that juts out into the gulf. Here they had unpacked their "arabas," or bullock carts, and were waiting for the boats to come and take them off to the ships. It was one of the most sorrowful sights I ever saw.

These arabas were run out into the sea to form landing stages; never again to be used for the purposes for which they were constructed; never again to bring home the golden wealth of harvest amidst the joyful shouts of the children, or the cheers of the village elders; never to be filled high with the rich yellow maize pods, or the graceful clusters of grapes—they lay half submerged in the sea, the last stepping-stone from peace and plenty to misery and hunger, seeming as if, lifeless as they were, they had advanced into the water to bid a long farewell to the exiles, and say a last God-speed for the weary journey that lay before them. The men sat silent and gloomy, with contracted brow. What their thoughts were I almost fear to surmise; but ideas of revenge must have been very near their hearts, though their tongues were silent. The women looked the picture of sorrow, with their heads, covered with their "yashmaks," bent forward in the attitude of grief, sobbing and thinking, doubtless, of happy days gone by that they should never know again.

The Russians were on this tongue of land also, accompanied by some Bulgarians, buying cattle, or rather compelling the refugees to sell theirs for almost nothing, threatening them if they did not accept the absurd prices offered. One man I saw compelled to sell a yoke of bullocks worth eighteen or nineteen lesas for three; and one poor fellow related how he gave his horse to a Bulgarian to try it before concluding the bargain, but that the trier had ridden off and never returned.

The Russians had been drawing recruits from amongst the Bulgarian population in the district of Bourgas, but the men selected were not by any means aspirants for military glory, and as soon as they got a chance ran away. They were brought back, and lodged in a large "khan" under a guard,

and brought out to drill every day in parties. They reminded one of rats in a cage.

I stayed two or three days in Bourgas, simply because I could not get away, there being no regular steamer service between that place and Varna, where I wished to go. Accordingly, I proposed riding to that place through the Misseveri Balkans—a district into which the Russians had not yet penetrated—but I was given to understand that such a proposal would not meet with the approval of the Russian authorities, and I hired a caique to row me round to Varna. I was accompanied by Mr. A. Brophy, a brother of the vice-consul. The northern shore of the Gulf of Bourgas terminates at Cape Emineh, and once round it, you can land in the Misseveri Balkans. We started about 12 o'clock at night, and, favoured by the wind which blows off land during the night, reached the Cape shortly after daylight, when, to our intense disgust, the breeze died away, and we lay like a log on the water. There was nothing to do but take to the oars, which was very hard work, as there was not a breath of air to cool us, and a blazing hot sun to work under.

About three hours after rounding the Cape we landed at a village called Errili; here we spent the night. The next morning, having procured horses, we went as far as the village of Ivorjick, the principal village of the district before spoken of as the Misseveri Balkans, and the seat of the local Government. The chief of the village was an old friend of Mr. Brophy's, and we were most hospitably received. They told us that the Russians were treating the Turkish inhabitants who lived on the borders of the district very badly.

On the 2nd of May they had surrounded the village of Kara Ach with 150 soldiers. The male population were seized and locked up in a house, while the women were

violated and the village sacked. The Cossacks, although there was plenty of grass in the neighbourhood, had turned their horses in to graze on the young crops of the villages of Daoulty, Yenige, and Tartar Kawi, selecting such fields as were the property of Turks, and leaving those of the Bulgarians untouched. There was a Kaimakam at Ivorjick; he related to me how the Bulgarian inhabitants of a village called Sugulu, which is within the Misseveri district—and therefore not under the rule of the Russians, according to the treaty of San Stefano—had refused to answer the demand made for recruits, saying that they were not Russian subjects, and laid their case before the Kaimakam of Ivorjick, who refused to consent to the Bulgarians being pressed for conscription against their will. All the Turks expressed their confidence in England, and desired to fight the Russians again if English officers were given them. The chief of the village before mentioned paraded his four sons before us (he had lost three others in the war), and said—"There they are, all ready to go if they had proper officers, but without that I will not let them go; it is useless."

It is a day's ride from Ivorjick to Varna. On the way a large river has to be crossed; the southern bank is very low and swampy, and you have to traverse about three miles of a marshy jungle in order to reach the ferry. It is worse, I imagine, than the Dismal Swamp, and it took us three hours to wade through it. About sunset we reached Varna. There were very few refugees in the town, most of them having gone to Constantinople by sea. While I was there they commenced embarking the troops preparatory to evacuating the town.

I returned to Constantinople by the first steamer, and a few weeks after found myself once more at home in England.

The question often suggests itself to me—What is to

become of all these refugees in the future? Will Europe, especially England, permit that these hundreds of thousands of unfortunate people shall be prevented from returning to their homes? Are the massacres and atrocities now being committed by the Bulgarians to go on unchecked? Will England do anything to help these poor of God's great family, and put them in the way of winning their daily bread?—to put down by her moral force, or, if necessary, by force of arms, such proceedings as are a disgrace to humanity, and, even more, to Christianity?—to maintain the reputation which her sons have everywhere gained for her of being foremost in the noble work of charity—a very sister to suffering humanity?

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